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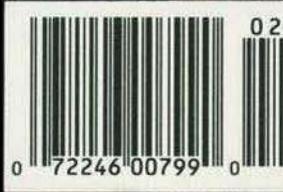
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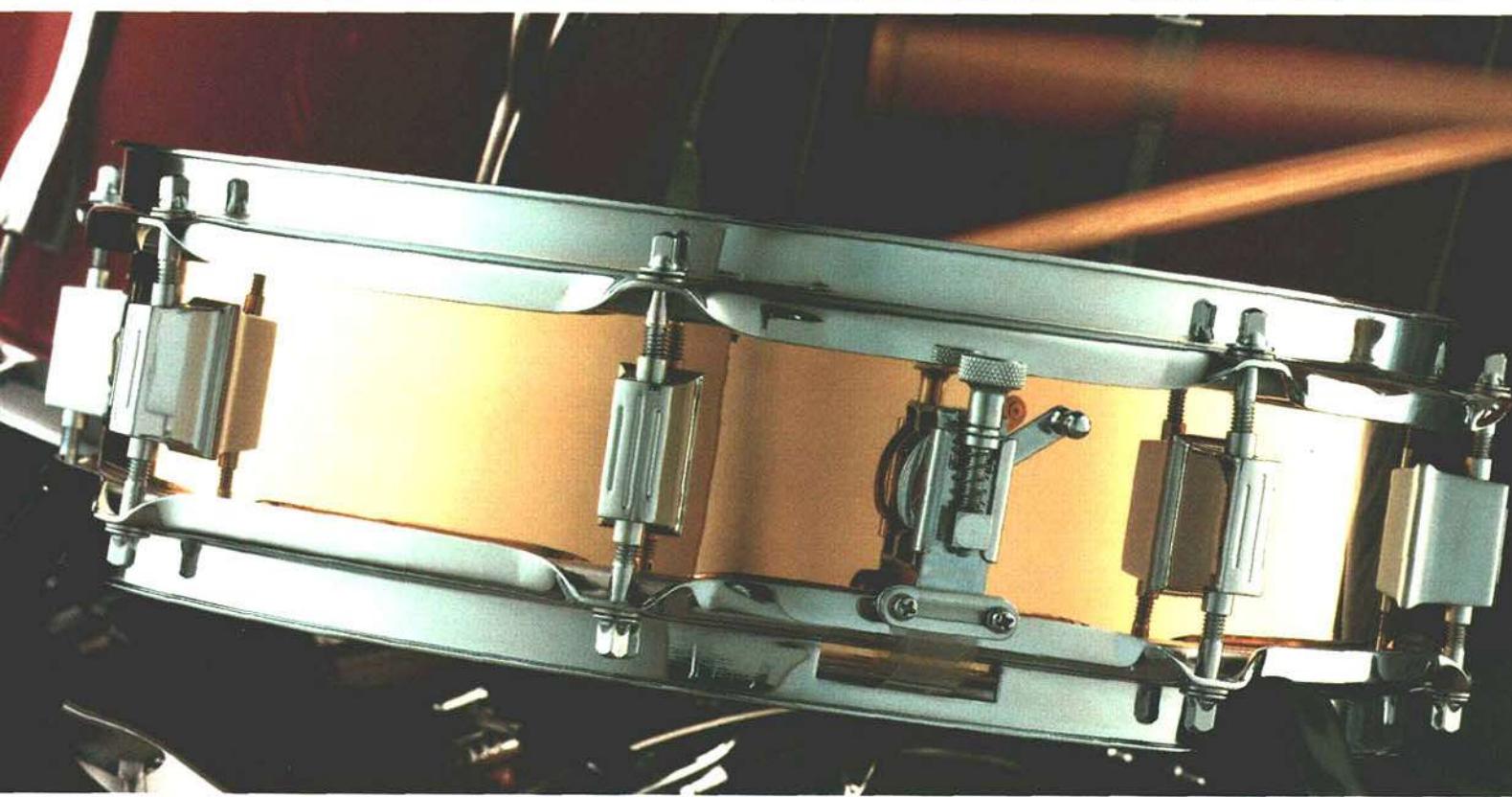
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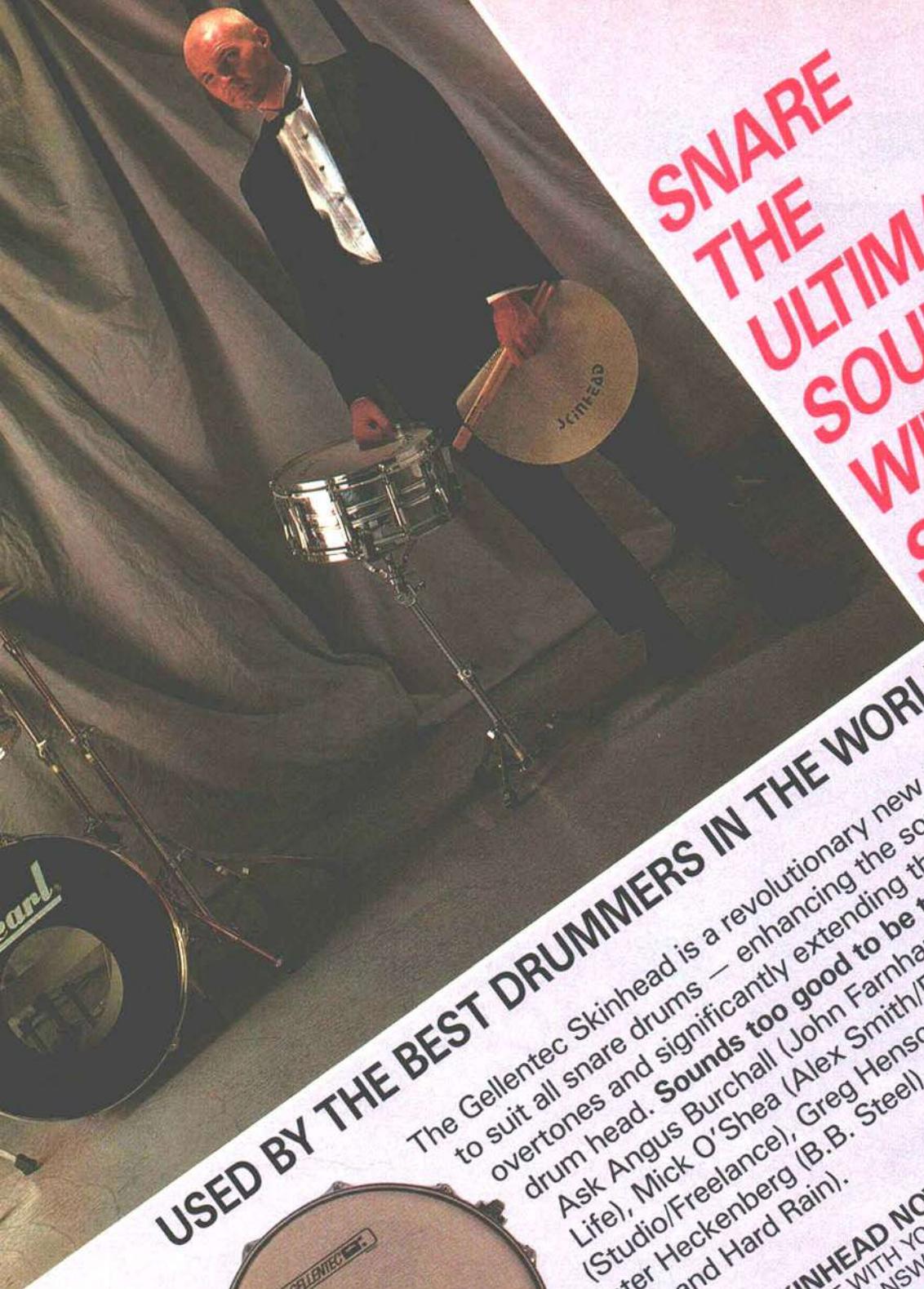
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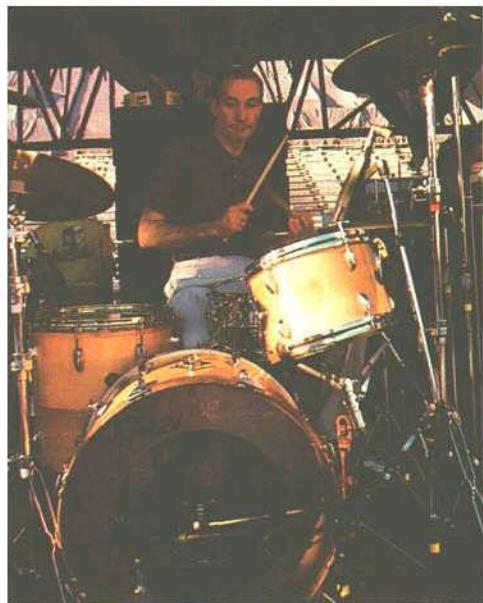


Photo by Paul Natkin



Photo by Richard Laird



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What does jazz have to do with the Rolling Stones? Stones drummer Charlie Watts fills in the puzzle piece, and provides some insights on the band's latest tour and album. Plus, transcriptions of classic Stones drumbeats.

by Rick Mattingly

24 FREDERICK WAITS

Frederick Waits has put his stamp on the music of Stevie Wonder, the Temptations, and Smokey Robinson & the Miracles. A left turn toward jazz followed soon after, including work with Freddie Hubbard, McCoy Tyner, and a host of other jazz greats. In this interview, Frederick discusses his career with such luminaries, plus work on projects like M'Boom and Colloquium III.

by Jeff Potter

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Former Tony MacAlpine drummer Deen Castronovo is now with Bad English, a band that includes rock veterans Neil Schon and John Waite. Here, Deen tells what's involved with the job, and how he has handled his shot into the big time.

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Photos and highlights of our third Festival, featuring Dave Weckl with Eyewitness, Jack DeJohnette and friends, Vinnie Colaiuta, Danny Gottlieb, Gregg Bissonette, Liberty DeVitto, Chad Wackerman, Michael Shrieve and David Beal, Carl Palmer, and taiko group Soh Daiko.

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EDITOR'S OVERVIEW

Reflections On A Festival

You'll find our report on *MD*'s Drum Festival Weekend in this issue—and what a weekend it was! Nearly 2,000 enthusiastic drummers from all across the country turned out to greet a lineup of some of the finest artists performing today. It was truly a drummer's dream weekend, brimming with highlights that extended from center stage to back stage, and after hours as well.

There were so very many inspiring moments that it's difficult to recall them all, and yet the high point of practically every performance is indelibly etched in my memory: Soh Daiko's spirited Japanese Taiko drumming. Chad Wackerman's remarkable fluency in odd time signatures. Liberty DeVito's presentation of what it takes to be a part of so many hit recordings. Danny Gottlieb's marvelous technical insight. Dave Weckl's precision and mastery of so many aspects of the instrument. The high-tech exploits of Mike Shrieve and David Beal. Gregg Bissonette's enthusiasm and blazing double bass drum work. An opening solo by Vinnie Colaiuta that bordered on frightening. Jack DeJohnette's intensity and incomparable inventiveness. Carl Palmer's gracious Hall Of Fame acceptance speech, followed by a dazzling display of snare drum virtuosity.

An event like this also inevitably produces those special moments where the admiration of one artist for the other—and the obvious comradeship shared among *all* drummers—becomes even more evident: Vinnie Colaiuta sitting on the floor behind Jack DeJohnette, delighting to every rhythmic flurry. Gregg Bissonette completely absorbed in Dave Weckl's flawless execution. Joe Morello checking out all the younger players from an offstage position, sporting a smile of approval. Jim Chapin's backstage dissertation on the finer points of the legendary Tiny Kahn's drumming style for all to appreciate. Palmer and Morello sharing technical concepts tapped out on a back-room countertop.

After hours? Well, there was a whole other show going on here: Hanging out in the hotel lounge until 2:00 A.M. on Saturday night with some of the wilder members of our industry. (You guys know who you are!) Listening to Zildjian's Lenny DiMuzio tell classic Buddy Rich stories as only he can. Gregg Bissonette's side-splitting Rodney Dangerfield monologues and Charlie Callas impressions, which made everyone's attempt to have a relaxing dinner a challenging experience!

On a serious note, my sincere thanks to all of the performing artists, along with our good friends at Drum Workshop, Tama, Ludwig, Paiste, Zildjian, Premier, Pearl, Yamaha, Sabian, Sonor, Korg USA, and the LP Music Group. Festival '89 would not have been possible without their interest and support. My deep appreciation also to every member of the *MD* staff who worked so hard all weekend long, with special thanks to Festival Coordinator Rick Van Horn, who somehow has successfully managed to piece it all together for the past three years.

As for the nearly 2,000 young drummers who attended, you really couldn't have asked for a more attentive, well-behaved, and enthusiastic group. Meeting with so many *MD* readers, and noting the inspired expressions on their faces as they headed for home Sunday night, was the perfect cap to an extraordinary weekend. Thanks for coming, everyone. Personally, I can't wait to do it all again!



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HOT ROD

Photography by Paul Simeone

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FESTIVAL WEEKEND '89

I just felt I had to write to thank you and tell you what a great two days the *MD* Festival Weekend was. Seeing so many diverse and talented drummers—and having the opportunity to meet some of my personal favorites—was any drummer's dream.

Perhaps the most important part of the event was the educational experience that I felt I took home with me after the Festival was completed. I believe that I am an improved drummer because of it. I also had the pleasure of meeting Mr. and Mrs. Spagnardi, and I owe Gregg Bissonette a personal debt of thanks for helping me to get "up close" to some of my favorite drummers. I've never met a nicer, more down-to-earth guy in this business. Thanks so much again!

Eddie deFussine
Lyndhurst NJ

ERRORS IN NOVEMBER

I've been reading your magazine for over two years now, and as an aspiring drummer I am impressed by your excellent reporting and interviews. But I found two mistakes (most likely just overlooked in your editing department) in the November '89 issue.

Jonathan Mover's interview was excellent, and truly informative. However, the diagram in "Mover's Setup" shows only one snare drum and four toms—two rack, two floor. Yet, in all the photos, Jonathan has two snares: a 5x14 in the normal position, and a piccolo on the left of his hi-hat. Also, he has three rack toms. Teri Saccone did a wonderful job with the article (as she always does). I assume that this was just a last-minute error. Or was it his new setup?

In the same issue, Rick Van Horn's *Product Close-Up* on Yamaha's *Remote*

Wire Hi-Hat is correct in stating that the drop clutch does have a trip lever coming out at an angle that makes it clumsy to store in a trap case. But Rick's suggestion of giving the trip rod a "90-degree bend upwards" can't work, because to release the lower half of the clutch, you must press down on the existing lever. A 90-degree upward bend of the release lever would necessitate an odd movement to release the lower half of the clutch: an outward pull that would cause stick jams between the lever and the central shaft of the hi-hat. As most drummers know, that could cause a lot of problems. Rick does a lot of research on products, and I feel this was just an error that also went unnoticed.

Other than these two errors, both writers did good jobs. Keep up the good work; people do notice.

Chris Bergh
Maiden MA

Editor's note: Although your eyes are sharp, your assumptions aren't quite accurate. The information for Jonathan Mover's setup came not from Teri Saccone, but from Jonathan. It is not unusual for a drummer's "basic setup"—which is what we ask for when we seek information for our setup diagrams—to differ from photos in the feature. Often a given drummer will augment his or her "basic" kit with additional equipment for a specific performance, tour, or recording session. At other times, the setup information may actually be more recent than the photos. We do make it a point to go directly to the drummer in question in order to get the most accurate and up-to-date information possible regarding the equipment he or she uses.

In regard to Rick Van Horn's Product Close-Up, Rick replies, "If we assume that the trip lever in question remained where it was on the top half of the drop-lock clutch,

you're quite correct in saying that a 90-degree bend upwards would cause problems. In that event, a 90-degree bend downwards would do the trick, but that might run the lever afoul of the rest of the mechanism below. My concept—which I apparently did not make clear—was that the lever should be bent upward, and that whatever it took to facilitate that should also be done. Basically, this would mean moving the lever to the other side of the mechanism, so that as it was tripped inward, toward the central shaft, the release hook would be moved outward, thus dropping the lower section."

COVERING THE AVANT GARDE

Hurray for *Modern Drummer*! I would like to thank you for the increasing coverage of drummers and percussionists working in the fields of new music/avant garde and avant garde jazz-going all the way back to the article on *Nexus* in *Modern Percussionist*, to your coverage of the *Downtown Drummers*, David Van Tieghem, Anton Fier, Glen Velez, Joey Baron, and lately Bobby Previte and Amy Knowles. I believe this area of music to be one of the most exciting and interesting for percussionists, and the single most vital area of music today. This is the music that paves the way for tomorrow, and is definitely the most groundbreaking, visionary, and unconventional music in existence. I hope that your coverage of the players of this kind of music will interest more drummers and percussionists to look to this side of contemporary music and see and hear the incredible talent and virtuosity presented in it.

This letter was inspired by Adam Budofsky's excellent *Jazz Drummers' Workshop* article on inspiration in the November issue of *MD*. I hope that more drummers can find inspiration in this new mu-

continued on page 120

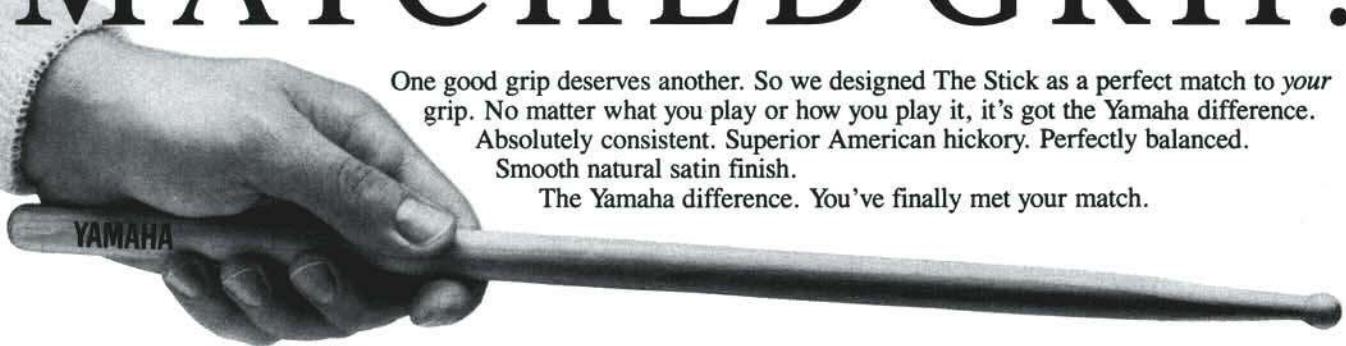
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TAMA

Tony Braunagel

One of the great highlights of the 1989 Bonnie Raitt tour was the inclusion of drummer Tony Braunagel. He provided such a shot to the rhythm section that the selection of old and new numbers took on a re-energized sparkle. If you saw one of the shows, you might have been surprised at just how dramatic a range Braunagel's drum sound entailed.

"With Bonnie, the drum sounds have worked out exceptionally well," explains Tony exuberantly. "I get compliments on that from musicians all the time. I don't mean to pat myself on the back, but it's something that's so nice to hear. From up on stage, I don't always know how they're sounding in a given room. Of course, with Bonnie, the music ranges from real subtle to ridiculous bashing kind of stuff, which is great for me."

Braunagel, who is originally from Houston, Texas, says that his background is basically a mixture of R&B and ethnic styles. "That's the only stuff I played as a kid," he offers. "Later I got a little bit into jazz, and then I also started to play a lot of African and reggae stuff. Ethnic music intrigues me so much more than the white boy rock 'n' roll. I'd rather be right in the middle of a rhythm that's a little bit funky, with everybody moving around it. I'm good at sitting right in the middle of that. I'm from the southern school of playing whatever you want, just as long as you get the backbeat right."

Braunagel certainly got a strong dose of blues-oriented backbeat feel playing with the likes of legendary greats John Lee Hooker, Lightning Hopkins, and Jimmy Reed. "I was very young at the time," he says, "but I realized how very lucky I was to have a training ground like that. It gave me a real street attitude about that style of music, and you can't get that from studying. To make it viable and applicable you have to go for it, just play the stuff."

Braunagel's diverse career has taken him from stints with

Rickie Lee Jones to Bette Midler to another blues icon, singer Etta James. In fact, it was during the time Braunagel was working with James that he was offered the Bonnie Raitt gig. "I was recommended by Marty Grebb, the sax player in Etta's band," he explains. "I got the call from Bonnie on a Friday, auditioned the following Monday, and after about a song and a half, she said, 'That's it, that's cool. You've got the gig.' It's been a wonderful experience ever since, playing with the talented members of this group. Bonnie is excellent to work for, and it's so important for me to be happy in what I'm doing—and this band makes me feel that way."

Next up for Tony is a newly formed, recently signed group called the Eclectics, fronted by actor/singer Dennis Quaid. Braunagel is charged up about its future. "It's southern, Texas-style rock, with some New Orleans, zydeco, and R&B influences" is how he describes the band, who have a release slated for this spring. "Everybody involved is really geared into that sort of sound. And it's a group thing; we're all writing the material. It's gonna be a very organic sound."

—Teri Saccone

Milton Sledge

Milton Sledge is one of the lucky few to remain busy in the Nashville studios these days. He's worked on the last couple of Kathy Mattea albums, including "18 Wheels And A Dozen Roses," a song that took several awards last year—including Single of the Year—from the Country Music Association and the Academy of Country Music.

"At the time we cut that, we were just going for a good feel, something that would fit Kathy," says Milton. "We might have tried the song with two or three different feels, trying to find the right thing that made her sound good, maybe experimenting with brushes, playing a half-time feel—different things. On that particular cut, I cut it with

brushes and then went back and overdubbed cymbals, because you can't get that bright splash stuff with the brushes. We were just really trying to build it around her singing, because her voice is the thing."

The album he recently cut with Crystal Gayle, another Allan Reynolds production, was a challenge of sorts, according to Milton. "A lot of singers just lay back and let the band get the track, but she nails it every take. So we know we've got to do really great in order to keep up with her," he laughs. "She kills! It's amazing. She's got a really trained voice with a lot of soul. It really kicks us up another notch."

Milton says working with the O'Kanes recently was a little unusual, but great fun. "It's great stuff. They've got a definite proven style. On the first day they booked two sessions, a 2:00 and a 6:00, and on the 2:00, we came in, rehearsed four or five tunes, and then took a supper break. We came back at 6:00 and nailed them one right after another, like it was a live band doing it. Usually you rehearse the song, cut it, and then forget it," he laughs. "We had a ball with this. It really felt like a band. It was all cut live, but on one tune we took a regular 24-track tape box, turned it over, and taped it onto my snare case. I played it with brushes, which was a strange sound, but it worked, and we overdubbed that. They had said they wanted that song to sound like Elvis' 'That's Alright Mama,' so I did the traditional-type brush beat on the snare and then added this thing just on the backbeat to beef it up. They loved it."

The previous story is a good example of Milton's overall attitude about working with various producers. "Really, it all boils down to playing whatever the song asks for. I don't play a lot of fills; I'm more of a feel player. If they want more, I give them more; if they want less, I give them less. If I leave there knowing the track felt good, I have a smile on my face. But if I leave there and it's questionable but

they love it, then I've got to go with that. There are times I do step in and say, 'Maybe that other take was better,' but you have to know when you can do that, which just comes from being around them and knowing them."

Other recent projects for Milton include working with Barbara Mandrell on a record, which he shared drumming duties with Larrie Londin, Garth Brooks, Johnny Rodriguez, and Russell Smith, and Shenandoah's last effort, which he shared with Owen Hale.

—Robyn Flans

Dennis Diken

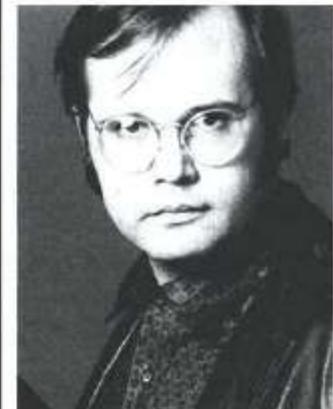


Photo by Deborah Feingold

This past fall, the Smithereens released their third album, *Eleven* (which drummer Dennis Diken explains is in tribute to the Frank Sinatra/Gene Kelly film *Oceans Eleven*, a Smithereens favorite), and their commitment to playing straightforward rock 'n' roll is still ever-present.

"Basic rock 'n' roll never goes out of style," relates Diken. "And let's face it, as a group, we've never been fashion plates, we've never been trendy. When we were coming up in the early '80s, rockabilly and techno-pop were happening, but we just never fit any category. Our strength is that we've had good songs, we play well together, and there is still a chemistry. We've practically grown up together."

How did the band approach the recording of *Eleven* in comparison to previous studio outings? For one thing, Diken



puts it down to the time element involved. "In a nutshell," he says, "the first two albums' basic tracks were completed in two and a half days. We took a lot longer on this one because our producer, Ed Stasium [recently of Living Colour fame], has a different working method than what we were used to. He'll record a whole bunch of takes of a rhythm track, then he'll splice together what he feels are the best portions of each take, therefore getting the strongest overall performance possible. Usually you do your drum tracks, guitars, and vocals, and then whatever you want to add or change, you overdub. Ed's way was a very different experience, and the results definitely make a stronger record overall."

Dennis recently married, and was asked how he would balance a music career—which is obviously comprised of a lot of traveling—and his new domestic life. "We're both strong individuals," he explains. "It's just a matter of us both accepting that I have to be away sometimes. It goes with the job. We both understand it [Dennis' wife, Donna, also works in the music industry], although we don't like that aspect of it. Some people just find it too much of a strain living this kind of life, but we've resigned ourselves to the fact that it's the way that it's got to be. And maybe, absence really does make the heart grow fonder."

Diken is very appreciative of the fact that the Smithereens have been successful enough for him to make a living from music alone—something neither he nor the rest of the band ever expected. "We never looked for a record deal. We just played our music, and the 'career' followed. If we hadn't gotten signed, we would have still continued to have simply enjoyed playing. We're just thankful to everyone who buys our records, comes to see us, and writes us letters. It may sound really corny, but if it weren't for our audience, we wouldn't be doing this."

—Teri Saccone

Luke Goss



While the name of the group Bros is pronounced "bross," "bros" is also slang for "brothers," which is exactly what Luke and Matt Goss are—twin brothers, to be exact. Matt supplies lead vocals while Luke is the drummer, but both wrote and arranged their current album, *The Time*, the follow-up to *Push*, the fastest-selling debut LP in U.K. history.

Luke says that with all the experiences that have come from the fame and excitement, *The Time* was easy to write. "My brother might come up with some lyrics and some chords, and then we'll get the bass line together," says Luke in a very thick British accent. "Then I listen to it, and it's totally up to me if it's going to be mid-tempo, funk, or whatever. We don't waste a lot of money in the pre-production stages. We pretty much know exactly what we want. We're really into grooves. On the album, I play drums and percussion, but I don't like to use tapes on stage, so we have a percussionist."

Live, Luke doesn't use any electronics either, except for triggers on his bass and snare drums. "On the monitor level, I'd say I have 35% trigger and the rest acoustic, because I need the extra weight on stage. Out front we have a 25/75 mix—more acoustic than trigger. When you play to stadiums or arenas, you can't get across in a purely acoustic form. It needs a little more punch so you can feel it in the chest. So I have two electronic

pads on stage just for real low tom sounds and the like."

In concert Luke especially enjoys playing "Drop The Boy," from the first album, which he describes as having a "dancy, poppy groove. I love playing 'Love To Hate You' as well. It's not one of my favorite tracks, but I enjoy playing it live. On the new album, I love playing 'Street Wise' because it has a very solid beat, but then there's a break-down section like a rap where instead of playing a rap beat, I do a solo that lasts about 16 bars and the singer does the rap on top of it, which creates two sides of music."

When Bros is headlining, Luke enjoys employing theatrics. "We're really into giving the audience a show. They pay more for two hours than they do for the entire album, so when they come to a show, they deserve a show. At our last Wembley show, we had 25 tons of lighting and 600,000 watts of power, which is 100,000 more than Michael Jackson used when he played the stadium, plus we had 250 pyrotechnics. My drums went up in the air 22 feet on a hydraulic riser and spun around 360 degrees. The strobes looked like flames, like I was lifting off. It was great," he says of their U.K. tour, for which Debbie Gibson opened their shows. For their American tour, however, the roles were reversed. "The opening spot is 35 minutes of as much music as you can cram in, with a couple of light bulbs and a backdrop about three inches from the front of the stage. It's the music and that's it, and we loved it because when you get a reaction from just that, it means so much."

—Robyn Flans

News...

Ed Saughnessy finished up a short tour of the Midwest with the *Tonight Show* band, and recently he and his quintet have been performing in the southern California area.

Norm Roper recently back from the Monkees tour.

Honk, a band that originated in southern California

15 years ago with **Tris Imboden** on drums, was recently approached by Enigma to do a live album. The reunion release is imminent.

Rich Thurman on tour with Suzy Bogguss.

Mark Schulman touring with Richard Marx.

George Grantham working with a reunited Poco.

Lynn Coulter on Labatts beer Canadian TV spots.

Danny King on tour with Lilian Axe.

David Kemper, recently back from an arena tour with the Jerry Garcia Band, also did some work on the *Sister Kate* TV series.

Michael Blair in the studio with Suzanne Vega, Marc Cohn, and guitarist Marc Ribot.

Tommy Aldridge on recently released Whitesnake album, *Slip Of The Tongue*.

Nancy Given Prout playing with Universal Records' Wild Rose.

Vinny Appice in the studio with Dio.

Joe Donelly on Del Fuegos' recent release.

Stixx is a member of Relativity Records' Shotgun Messiah, who recently released their U.S. debut.

Bill Ward's Ward One: *Along The Way* was finally released a few months ago on Chameleon Records.

Dave Samuels has a new album, *Ten Degrees North*, with **Alex Acuna** on drums and percussion.

Matt Sorum on the road with the Cult.

Blas Elias has joined Slaughter, whose debut LP is due out on Chrysalis Records shortly.

Gina Schock in Europe working on an album.

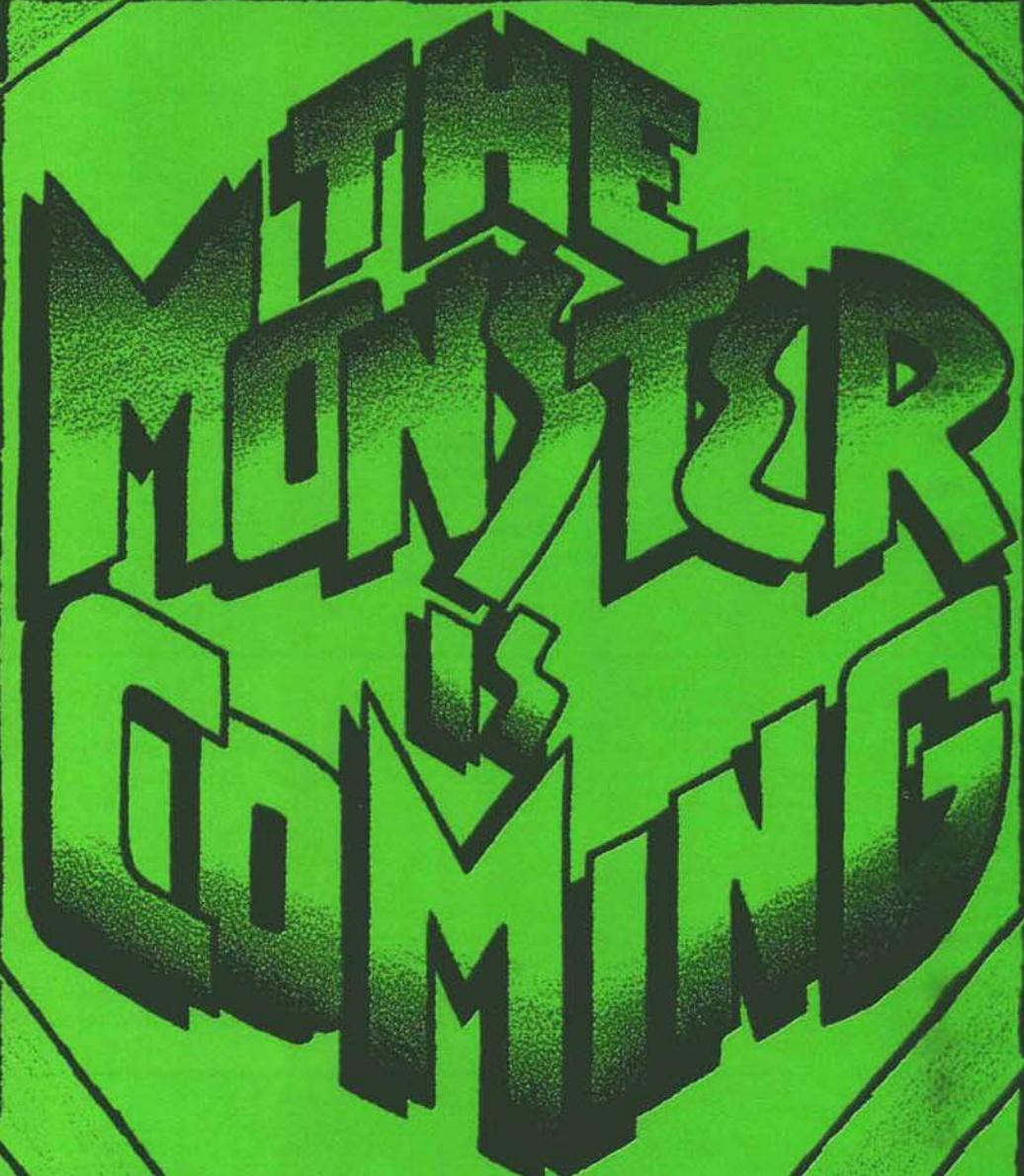
Tim Hedge touring with Holly Dunn.

Joey Kramer on tour with Aerosmith.

Willie Green on several cuts from Bob Dylan's latest album, *Oh Mercy*.

Eric Singer touring, with Badlands.

Tommy Igoe recording with Dave Grusin, Patty Austin, and New York Voices, with whom he's also touring.



MUSIC
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WILLIAM CALHOUN



Q. I was fortunate enough to see you live in St. Louis on the midwest leg of your tour. I must say that your style and feel for time impressed me beyond words! I'm interested in knowing about your entire setup: types of drums, cymbals, mic's, and any effects critical in getting your incredible drum sound.

Scott H.
Canton IL

A. Thanks for your compliments. My setup starts with Pearl's Custom Z series drums. I must say they sound amazing. Living Colour is presently out opening for the Rolling Stones, which is my first time playing stadiums. It's a different scene from playing clubs and theaters. I was looking for a strong and clear sound. The Custom Z drums are very powerful, but very natural-sounding. My drum sizes are 10x10, 12x12, and 13x13 rack toms, 16x16 and 18x18 floor toms, an 18x22 kick drum, an 8 1/2x14 Custom Z snare, and a liquid amber piccolo snare drum. I also use Pearl hardware and their single-bass rack system.

I'm using Zildjian cymbals. My current setup includes a 20" China Boy Low, a 20" medium crash, a 22" Z Light Power Ride, a 17" thin crash, an 18" K Dark Crash/Ride, a 12" Piggyback, and two sets of hi-hats: one made from two 14" New Beat bottom hi-hat cymbals and one 13" K/Z combination. I also use Zildjian Rock model drumsticks.

I use Remo heads. I prefer Pinstripes on the tops of my toms and the batter head of the kick drum. I use clear or Ebony Ambassadors on the bottoms. I only use Falams-K heads on my snares.

If you liked what you heard in St. Louis, all of the above is the basis of my sound. I'm not crazy about triggers. I've tried them,

and found some better than others. But I believe in having a good drum sound before you mike your drums. To answer your question about effects, I'm presently using an Akai S-1000 sampler and a DrumKat to trigger sounds not associated with the drumkit, such as keyboard sounds, orchestra hits, speeches, and assorted snips from old R&B records.

I'm still trying different microphones on my kit. I'm interested in using the AKG D112 in my kick and Zildjian's ZMC miking system on my cymbals. I'm still trying to focus on a snare and tom mic' that I would commit to using.

This outlines the equipment I'm using; the rest of my sound is up to my sound technician. We basically discuss projection, tones, and pitch, and which microphone is best for the playing situation. I'm picky about my drum sound. Touring with Living Colour over the past three years has put me in different kinds of rooms—from small rock clubs to college auditoriums, and most recently theaters and stadiums. It's important that you know how to adjust without losing your sound and personality. I also think it's important to have a good enough relationship with your sound technician for him or her to totally understand what you want. Make no mistake: It matters!

MIKEY DEE

Q. I've been listening to your latest album with King Diamond, and your drumming is excellent. I was wondering if you could explain a couple of your fills. The first comes during the song "Twilight Symphony." You use it several times, but it is most notable right at the end of the song. The second fill is in the song "Mother's Getting Weaker." It occurs after the guitar solo and leads from the slow section back into the double-bass part. Finally, in the song "Tea," you play several fills I think are called ruffs. You play

one at the end of the second chorus, and several others right before the guitar solo. Thanks for your time; I hope that with this new album you gain recognition for being one of the best drummers around.

Justin Murphy
New Cumberland PA

A. The first fill is a double-stroke beat between the floor tom and the bass drum: a double beat on the tom, then a double beat on the kick drums. It gives kind of a roll effect. The second fill is a double triplet: The first is between the snare and the toms;

the second is on the bass drums. This also gives a sort of rolling feel. The last one you refer to isn't really a ruff; it's a quick quadruplet played with a sequence that goes tom-kick-kick-snare. The fills aren't that hard; I combine snare, toms, and bass drums a lot into rolling feels that sound more complicated than they are.

Thanks for your good wishes about the new King Diamond album, but as of this moment I'm no longer with that group. I'm currently in rehearsals with Dokken, and looking forward to working with that band.

JOE MORELLO



Photo by Rick Mattingly

Q. I recently acquired a copy of the 1958 Newport Jazz Festival album that you did with the Dave Brubeck Quartet, which absolutely swings! On the Ellington tune "Jump For Joy," you have a fantastic-sounding riveted cymbal of some sort. In fact, on all of the Brubeck albums I have, it seems that you were using the same ride cymbal. If possible, could you pass along what this cymbal was, plus what equipment you're using now? I'm also curious about when you quoted "Shortnin' Bread" during your solo on "C Jam Blues," which also appears on the Newport album. Is that where you got the idea to do "Shortnin' Bread" for the *Gone With The Wind* album?

Darren Kuper
San Antonio TX

A. The cymbals I was using at the time of the Newport Festival were Zildjians, and the ride cymbal, strangely enough, wasn't

a riveted cymbal. It was a plain, 20" Zildjian ride—along with 14" hi-hats and 16" and 18" crashes.

As far as the idea for "Shortnin' Bread" goes, what happened was that we were doing a "Tribute To Duke Ellington" that particular night at Newport. It was also drizzling that night, and I was using calf heads. When we kicked into "C Jam Blues," the heads were real loose and low, and the pitches of the drums just happened to be there to play the quote of "Shortnin' Bread," so I did. We thought it sounded good at the time, so when we recorded our next album, Dave suggested that we put it in.

As for what I'm using now, I'm still playing Ludwig drums. I choose between Paiste and Zildjian because they're both great cymbals; both companies make excellent products.

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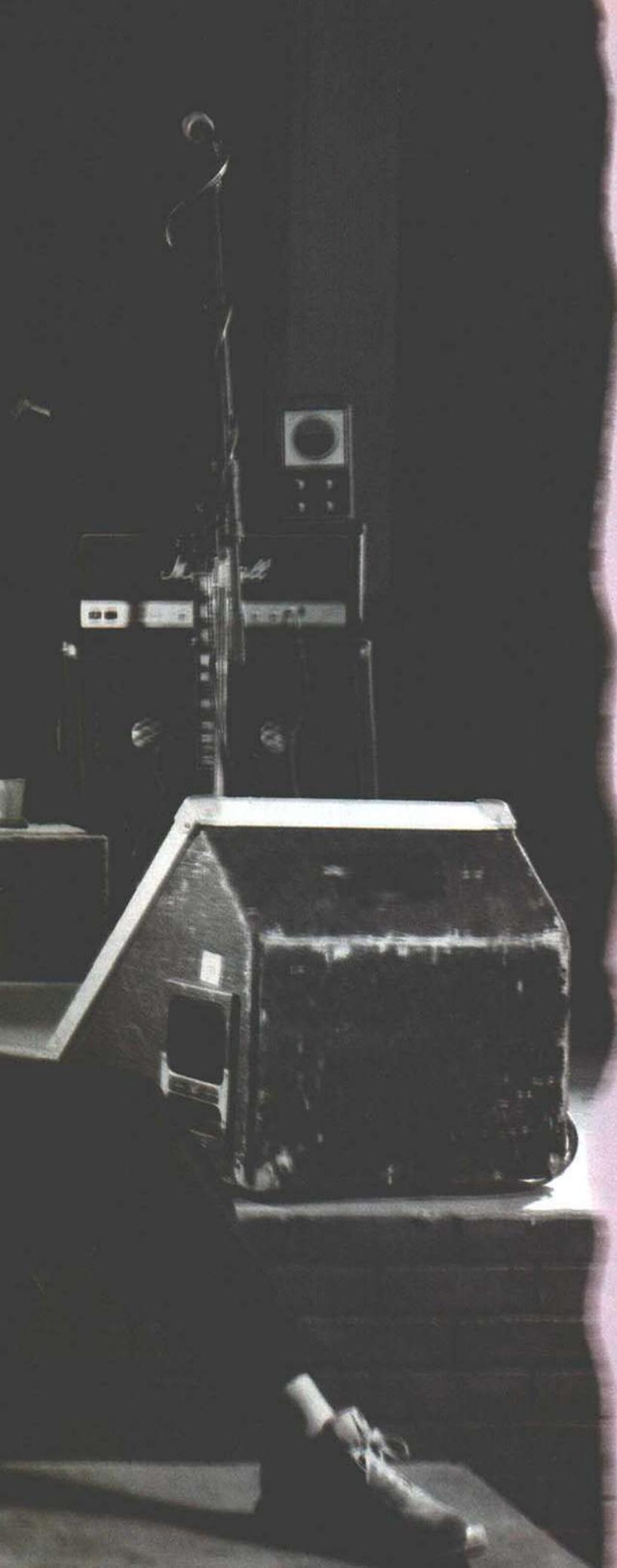
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Pearl

The best reason to play drums.

IT'S QUESTIONABLE

Q. I'm trying to locate a copy of a record made by Cozy Cole called "Topsy - Parts 1 & 2." I had the record—a 45 disc—many years ago. I've contacted many major record outlets, but all they could tell me is that the record is out of print. I cannot believe that the records of a legend like Cozy are all unavailable. Can you give me any help?

S.M.

Rego Park NY

A. We checked with one of New York City's best sources of rare or hard-to-find recordings: Downstairs Records. (They're actually two flights upstairs on 43rd street in Manhattan.) They informed us that they had a copy available. Their number is (212) 354-4684.

Q. After reading the *It's Questionable* item in the September '89 issue about *Brilliant* finishes on cymbals and how all this was achieved, I have a question. Can an older A Zildjian cymbal be polished to a *Brilliant* finish? I have two A's that are my favorites because they were my first two Zildjians: an 18" crash and a 21" ride. All of my other cymbals are K *Brilliants*, and I would love to have them all match. But I've been told that it can't be done.

P.G.

Santee CA

A. We checked with the Zildjian company about the possibility of "retro-fitting" your A Zildjians with a *Brilliant* finish. While Zildjian used to offer this service, they don't anymore, because it caused too many problems. The company could not guarantee whether or not the cymbal would retain its original sound after receiving the processing. Rather than risk ruining any cymbals, Zildjian has simply stopped the service.

However, a gentleman by the name of Jim Brodie operates a cymbal-cleaning/polishing service called Brodie's Bright Werks.

He uses a process that is different from that used by Zildjian, and he is confident that he can give you exactly the finish you are looking for—from a gentle cleaning to a mirror finish—with no risk to your cymbals. We have seen examples of Jim's work, along with several testimonials from very satisfied customers from all over the country. He is offering a legitimate service that would seem to be exactly what you are looking for. Orders are handled via UPS, and there is a sliding price scale depending on how you want the cymbals finished. For more information, contact Jim Brodie at 818 Cook Avenue, Billings, Montana 59101, (406) 252-3594.

Q. I recently purchased two cymbal boom stands made by Hohner. I needed to replace the felt and metal washers on the stands, but my local drumshop didn't carry the exact replacements and what they did have wasn't satisfactory. I am writing to you in hopes of obtaining Hohner's mailing address. Your help will be greatly appreciated.

K.B.

Green Bay WI

A. Hohner hardware was manufactured by a company called Konig & Meyer in West Germany. For the past few years, it was imported and distributed in the U.S. by H.S.S., Inc. However, recent fluctuations in the currency exchange rate between German marks and U.S. dollars, along with other factors, caused the manufacturer to increase the cost to a point where the line was no longer competitive in the U.S. market. Consequently, H.S.S. stopped distributing it, and it is effectively off the market here. However, Bob Cotton at H.S.S. suggests that you get in touch with him personally. He will see if he can provide something for you out of existing parts inventory, or offer some alternative suggestions. You can contact him at H.S.S., Inc., P.O. Box 9167, Richmond, Virginia 23227, (804) 798-4500.

Q. Is it possible to get either a Pearl logo bass drum head in a 20" size or a Pearl logo sticker? I have looked around a lot, but have only found 22" and 24" logo heads.

P.I.

Bolingbrook IL

A. You may not have seen any 20" logo heads in drumshops because 20" bass drums aren't in vogue at the moment and most dealers only have logo heads for the drumkits on their sales floors. However, Pearl is now promoting its MLX Jazz series of drumkits, which feature a choice of 20" or 18" bass drums, and the company is making logo heads available for both. You need only contact a local Pearl dealer and ask that a 20" logo head be ordered for you.

Q. Please give me an address that I can write to for information about drum corps.

J.M.

Evans LA

A. Contact Drum Corps International, 719 South Main, Lombard, Illinois 60148.

Q. I own a set of Ludwig drums in their *Classic* series. The drums are a beautiful mahogany finish in power depths, and I'm extremely pleased—except for one thing. I didn't notice it right away, but the bass drum's sound lead me to discover that the shell was not drilled or fitted with an air vent hole grommet. I've had the drums since October of 1988; what, if anything, can be done at this time? I'm pretty good with wood, but Ludwig would probably not recommend that I try tackling this myself. Is a bass drum without a vent hole prone to damage in any way?

S.P.

Pennsauken NJ

A. We spoke with Ludwig's Bob Britton, at the Monroe, North Carolina factory. He informed us that all Ludwig drums are fitted with a vent hole incorporated within the Ludwig logo badge on

continued on page 118

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From top left:
KENNY ARONOFF
DOM FAMULARO
DANNY GOTTLIEB
LANNIE LONDON

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*"One of the
things drums
do, actually,
is frighten me."*

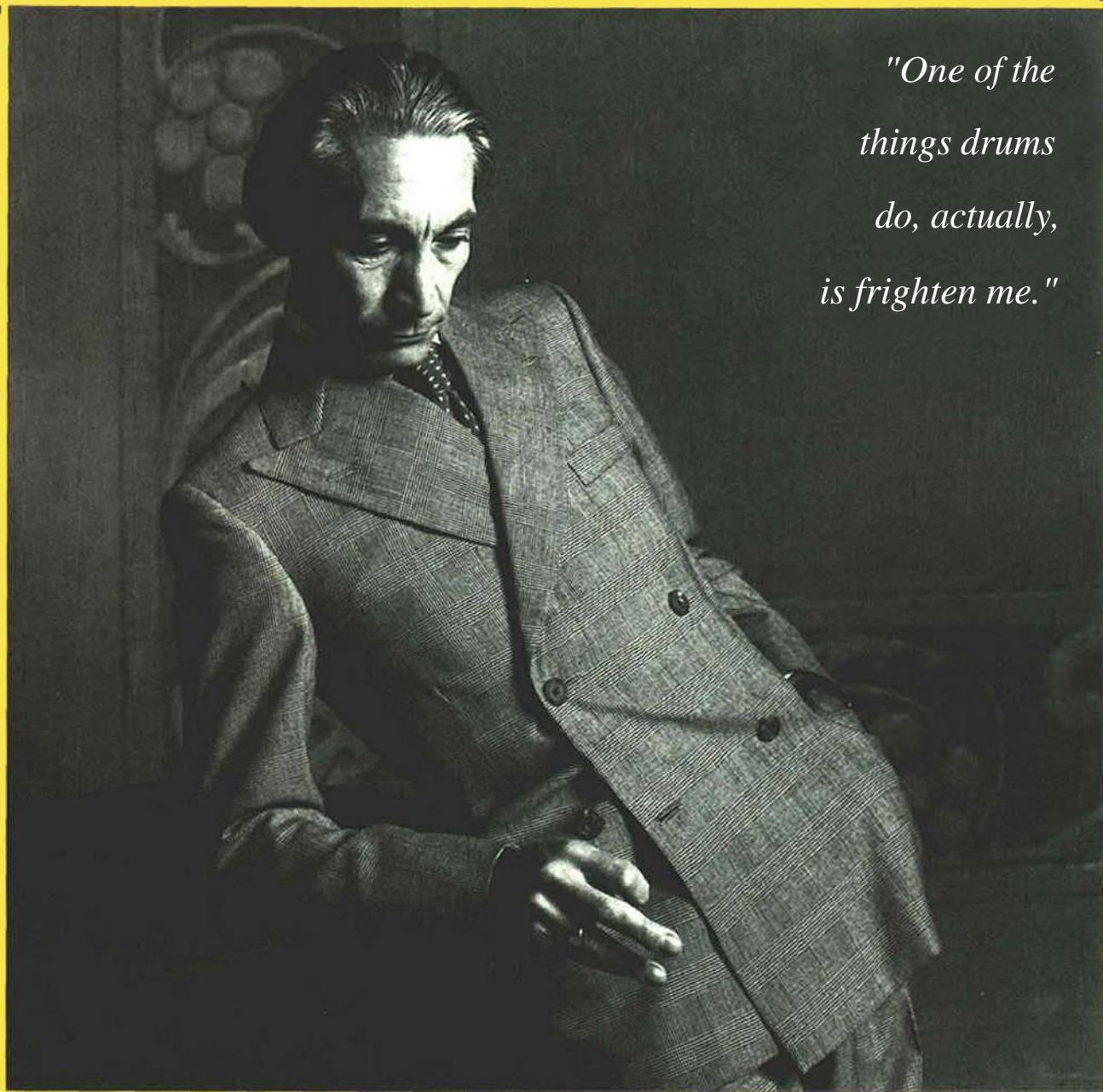


Photo by John Stoddard



H A R L I E



A T T S



by Rick Mattingly

Photo by Paul Mazzoni

"My attitude about equipment is, if it was good enough for Fred Astaire's drummer, then I'll use it," Charlie laughs. He is currently playing a 1957 Gretsch kit with a 22" bass drum, an 8 x 12 rack tom, and a 16 x 16 floor tom. His snare drum is a 6 1/2 x 14 Ludwig *Supra-Phonic*.

He has a Ludwig *Speed King* bass drum pedal and a Rogers hi-hat pedal. His cymbals consist of 14" Zildjian hi-hats, an 18" Ufip Chinese cymbal, an 18" Zildjian crash, and an 18" flat ride. "It's a cheap Italian one,"

Charlie says. "It doesn't even have a name on it."

Charlie uses Ludwig *IIA Joe Morello* model drumsticks.



Charlie Watts does that for a lot of people. For over a quarter of a century he has provided the beat for what is often called "The Greatest Rock 'n' Roll Band in the World." And for many, he is the very definition of what a rock drummer should be: simple, supportive, tasteful. With Charlie, it's often not so much what he plays as the way he plays it. He'll put the snare drum backbeat in just the right place; he'll be just sloppy enough riding on his swishy hi-hats to blend with Richards' and Ron Woods' grungy guitar sounds; and he'll infuse everything he plays with a definite sense of swing—a reflection of the influence that jazz has had on him. And while influences can reveal a lot



"**M**ick and I had written these songs," Keith Richards is saying, sitting in a dressing room before a recent Rolling Stones concert. "So then we had to get the guys in to play them. I drove up to the joint we were rehearsing in one afternoon, and I could hear these drums going. I thought, 'Ah, Charlie's here.' So I killed the engine and sat in the car for about five minutes listening to him playing—just warming up. 'Yeah, soundin' good.' Then I started to get my stuff together to go inside, and I happened to see myself in the driving mirror. I had this silly grin on my face. I didn't even know I was smiling, but that's what Charlie does for me."

about a person, they can only go so far in explaining that person's essence. With Charlie Watts, it starts with a basic love of drumming.

"To me," Charlie says, "there's something lovely about just sittin' down at the drums and playing. It's not the noise they make, particularly; it's just the feeling you get from it. When you play a lovely cymbal, it's like having a conversation, isn't it? Unless you actually have done it, it's something that can't really be explained. I do actually love it. I suppose I wouldn't have done it so long if I didn't."

But Charlie's love for drumming did not originate in the usual way; he has no stories to tell about banging on his mother's pots and pans. "I was never one of those guys," he says. "My love was rhythm brushes—wire brushes. The first thing I heard that I wanted to emulate was Chico Hamilton playing brushes on 'Walkin' Shoes' by Gerry Mulligan. For years I just played with brushes on a banjo head. It's amazing how many people don't like wire brushes. I love them. And to play them well—it's a lovely, understated way of playing."

"One of the things drums do, actually, is frighten me. I have enormous respect for them, but I don't really know much about drumming, to be honest with you. I mean, you should see me with a sheet of music; it's hilarious. So I can't talk to you the way I'd like to be able to, as someone who's played them this long. I don't know anything about them, really."

If ever the phrase "actions speak louder than words" has relevance, it's in the case of Charlie Watts. Perhaps he can't articulate his feelings about drumming the way he would like to; perhaps his music reading is not what he'd like it to be; perhaps he doesn't have the technical facility of some of his idols, such as Joe Morello or Buddy Rich. But countless recordings with the Rolling Stones attest to his abilities in a variety of styles and feels, his understanding of tension and release, his sense of color and dynamics. And

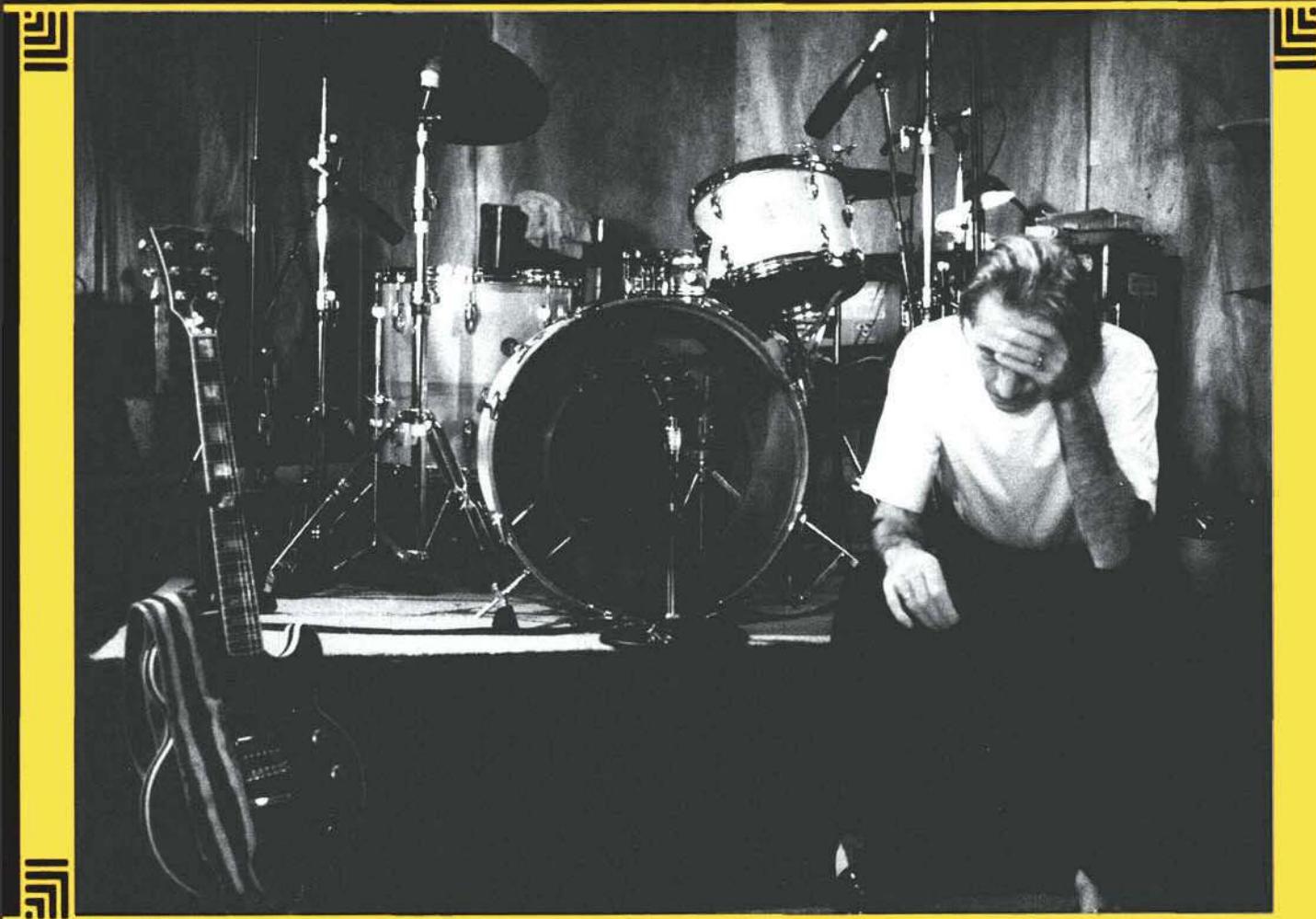


Photo by Dima Safan

then there are the subtle things that aren't necessarily obvious on the records....

"Let me tell you about the *Steel Wheels* sessions," Richards tells me. "At the studio, there's all this hi-tech stuff creepin' in, and cats are working with click tracks and all that. So we did a couple of run-throughs with this little machine. Charlie and I are looking at each other, because we *know*, but he had to beat the machine. So he said, 'You want it like that? Here goes,' and he duplicated the click track tempo from the beginning of the song to the end of it, perfect. Then he said, 'Now, what it *should do* is come up a little bit in tempo here, and then it should pull back there....,' which is what drumming is all about. It's a bit of expression, instead of people looking at numbers and readouts. That doesn't constitute rhythm; that just constitutes timing. That's what Charlie knows innately, and that's why I love him."

The click track wasn't Charlie's only run-in with technology during the sessions for *Steel Wheels*. At one point, producer Chris Kimsey showed him how his drum sounds could be sampled and loaded into a drum machine. "He can actually play me," Charlie says, incredulously. "At least, he can play what he thinks I'd play, but it's my sound, the drums that I play. I mean, I would probably play them totally different, and I doubt if it would sound the same. But he could play his version of me playing with my drumkit sound. That's incredible, isn't it? That makes a mockery of all that I love, in a way." Charlie gives a grim chuckle. "He'll be the first one to get lynched, come the revolution."

What Charlie loves about music more than anything is the human element that is involved—the lack of consistency, if you will. He finds it expressed best by jazz musicians playing in clubs. "Elvin Jones, to me," Charlie says, "is a classic jazz drummer, because he'll be just alright one night and amazingly brilliant the next. I love players like that. I, personally, would like to be just as good every time I play with the Stones, because we have the

pressure of a lot of people coming to see us. So you try to be as good as you can every night. Elvin obviously does that, but he has this wonderful way of being beyond good.

"Chet Baker was another classic jazz player," Charlie continues. "I saw him at Ronnie Scott's just before he died. One night I took my wife to see him, and he was bloody awful. There's no two ways about it: He was terrible. The next night I went back with a friend of mine, and he was fantastic. And that was in the space of two nights. So it was up and down. Hell to live with, I should think, but to catch him on that second night was *amazing*. He led such a rough life, with his habits and the way he lived, that it had a premature effect on his ability. He lost his teeth, so he couldn't play his trumpet the same way, but when he was on, he still carried it off in a really unique, lovely way."

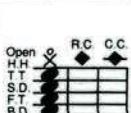
"That's why I like clubs, to see people play like that. I don't go there to say, 'Oh, he's bloody awful,' or to feel that I'm any better. It's to see the great players

**"Most
drummers
are crazy,
aren't
they? They
don't all
start off
crazy, but
they end up
that way.**

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CHARLIE's BEATS

MUSIC KEY



"Satisfaction" (Out Of Our Heads)

The Stones' first major hit featured a classic, basic, driving beat from Charlie, complemented by a tambourine.

"Get Off Of My Cloud" (December's Children [and everybody's])

Stones songs have usually been built around simple, repetitive riffs. For the follow-up to "Satisfaction," the signature riff came from the drums. Charlie's hi-hat is particularly swishy.

"19th Nervous Breakdown" (Big Hits [High Tide And Green Grass])

Although we've notated the following example with triplets to emphasize the swing feel, this is actually an example of that classic rock feel that is somewhere in between a shuffle and straight 8ths.

"Paint It, Black" (Aftermath)

After a short sitar intro, Charlie sets up a driving beat, riding 8th notes on his tom-tom.

The above beat sets up a tension during the first half of each verse, which Charlie releases in the second half by going to a swishy hi-hat with snare drum backbeats.

"Jumpin' Jack Flash" (Big Hits [High Tide And Green Grass])

Charlie's first use of a pattern that has become his trademark, where he comes off of the hi-hat for the snare drum backbeats. This song demonstrates the subtle effect that pattern has. For the first half of the song, the feel is a little more lifting, but when maracas come in playing straight 8ths midway through the track, the feel becomes more driving.

"Street Fighting Man" (Beggars Banquet)

Charlie picks up on this song's theme of "marchin' chargin' feet" with his use of bass drum and floor tom. The drums and guitar tracks were originally recorded on Keith Richards' cassette recorder, giving them a particularly raw sound.

"Honky Tonk Women" (Big Hits [High Tide And Green Grass])

One of the Stones' most distinctive intros ever, the syncopated accents on the cowbell create a somewhat ambiguous feel, until the snare drum backbeat comes in and puts everything into focus.

"Brown Sugar" (Sticky Fingers)
Nothing fancy, just a driving feel.

(In addition to the albums listed after each song, all of the above songs can be found on *The Rolling Stones Singles Collection, The London Years*, on Abkco Records.)

"Bitch" (Sticky Fingers)
This tune is built around a four-bar riff, and while Charlie tends to vary the bass drum part from phrase to phrase, he always catches the brass hits on the first and second beats of the second bar.

"Miss You" (Some Girls)
As disco became an influence on the Stones in the '70s, Charlie started playing straight fours on his bass drum. He also sometimes used the typical disco-style open hi-hat upbeats. On "Miss You," he alternates between the following three patterns. (Charlie used the second pattern on a number of tunes over the next few years, including "She Was Hot" and "She's So Cold.")

"Some Girls" (Some Girls)
Not one of the Stones better-known tracks, but an interesting example of a slower, 16th-note feel from Charlie. Often, he fills in all of the 16ths in a beat.

"Shattered" (Some Girls)
Charlie's definitive hi-hat/backbeat pattern turns up again, but he varies the bass drum pattern throughout the tune.

"Emotional Rescue" (Emotional Rescue)
The steady disco pulse is still in evidence, but Charlie alternates this pattern with the main "Miss You" beat, again achieving rhythmic tension and release.

continued on page 60



Photo by Richard Laird

After rapping her knuckles hard on the front door, the visiting neighbor takes a step back, waiting patiently on the porch. Through the open porch, the warm, humid Jackson, Mississippi breeze idles by. Mississippi, the Magnolia

State, world's most abundant producer of catfish and home to a small but impressive music community. She raps again and the door opens. Mrs. Waits greets the visitor as she wipes her hands on her apron. "Hello, Mrs. Waits.

Life Experience

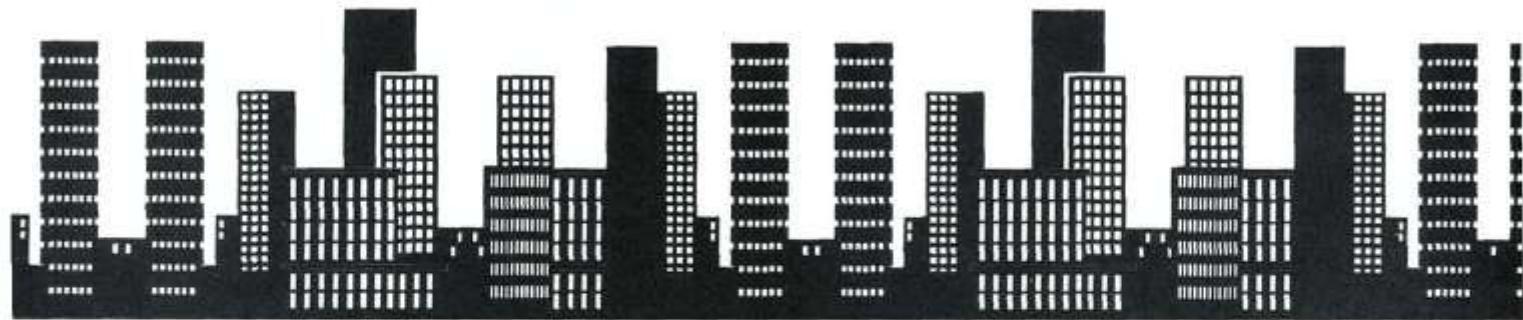
by Jeff Potter

"I just came by because from my place nearby I always hear little Frederick playing and playing his drum..."

"Yes?"

"And now I haven't heard him practicing. Is everything okay...?"

Frederick Waits



They are firing Frederick Waits because he's loved. Little Willie John's manager is peeling cash off his palm, giving the spunky 16-year-old his final pay. "Hey," panics Waits, "I'm not leaving!" It's the summer between Frederick's junior and senior years in high school, and he has been traveling with R&B artist Little Willie John, famous for his classic hit, "Fever." It has been a thrill for Frederick being a part of Willie John's backup band, the Upsetters, who had formally been with Little Richard. They have just completed a stint at Small's Paradise, Frederick's first introduction to big New York City, the next stop is California, and now they're telling him, "Scram"?

"It sure has been nice; you've really been a nice cat, man, and we enjoyed you," concludes the road manager.

"I don't want to leave," Frederick repeats.

"Willie's not going to *let you stay*. We all agree that you should go back and finish school. When you finish, you can come back." Days later, Frederick boarded the plane at Kennedy, and flew back to Jackson carrying his kit and his head held low. Today he recalls the sting, resolving with a long pause, "Those cats did that for me. I'll never forget it." One year later, after completing school, Frederick headed straight back to Detroit to dig his heels in again and found himself deep in the center of the music scene. In 1968, Little Willie John died of pneumonia in prison in Walla Walla, Washington, where he was incarcerated for manslaughter. Frederick wasn't able to thank Willie, but he has learned to pass on the lesson.

The young drummer was hit with another dose of "tough love" years later on the road with a Motown tour. Largely untraveled and as yet unex-

posed to things he had only heard about, Frederick was the green rookie youngster of the road band. Once, when opening a door he shouldn't have, he froze at the threshold, facing a regalia of strange paraphernalia. Several musicians were sticking needles into the backs of their hands. One glared at him and said, "Look, I know what you see, but if I catch you doing it I will personally kick your ass."

"I started to realize that the whole band was in that and I wasn't," says Frederick. "There's a thing you acquire out there on the road in all that riffing and running. If you're able to settle back and absorb the lessons, it will last you through your whole career. It will help you judge things, give you stamina, and keep you on the right path. I went through a lot out there during that period, things that I see people falling into now. It was there then; it's not new. These

guys were *doing* it, but they knew I was clean, and they respected that."

Six years after Little Willie John's gig, Frederick is being tongue-lashed because he's loved. Papa Jo Jones is pacing and growling at the New York newcomer. They didn't call him "Papa" for nothing. "Young stuff!" he explodes. "Why did you do that?" "Jo Jones would literally curse me out," Frederick smiles. "He'd say, 'Why are you overshadowing the bass? Why are you playing like that? Don't you see that figure coming up right there? Why aren't you preparing for that figure? Set something up for the band! Hear me young stuff?' I would have to say, 'Yes, sir.' Then I'd go home when I wasn't as nervous, think about it, and discover, 'He's right, I could have set that up. What was I thinking?'"

Today, near his apartment in New York's Greenwich Village, Frederick is hailing a cab. It's 4:30 rush hour and spitting drizzle—tough conditions for cab-yielding. Frederick himself has somewhat the same energy as New York rush hour, but focused. Thin and wiry, his skin is stretched tightly over his face and his large pupils are intense, sometimes focused in the distance when in deep thought and at other times darting quickly when he's registering a rush of deep memories. The eyes remind one of the cocked alertness of a cat responding to the nocturnal sounds around him. His quick spring-loaded step

brings him to the opposite corner, where he spots a stray off-duty yellow cab, and ducks in. He's dressed in well-spent sneakers, black satin jacket, and a baseball cap displaying the name of one of his favorite teammates, "Max Roach." Even sitting on a cab seat, Frederick somehow gives

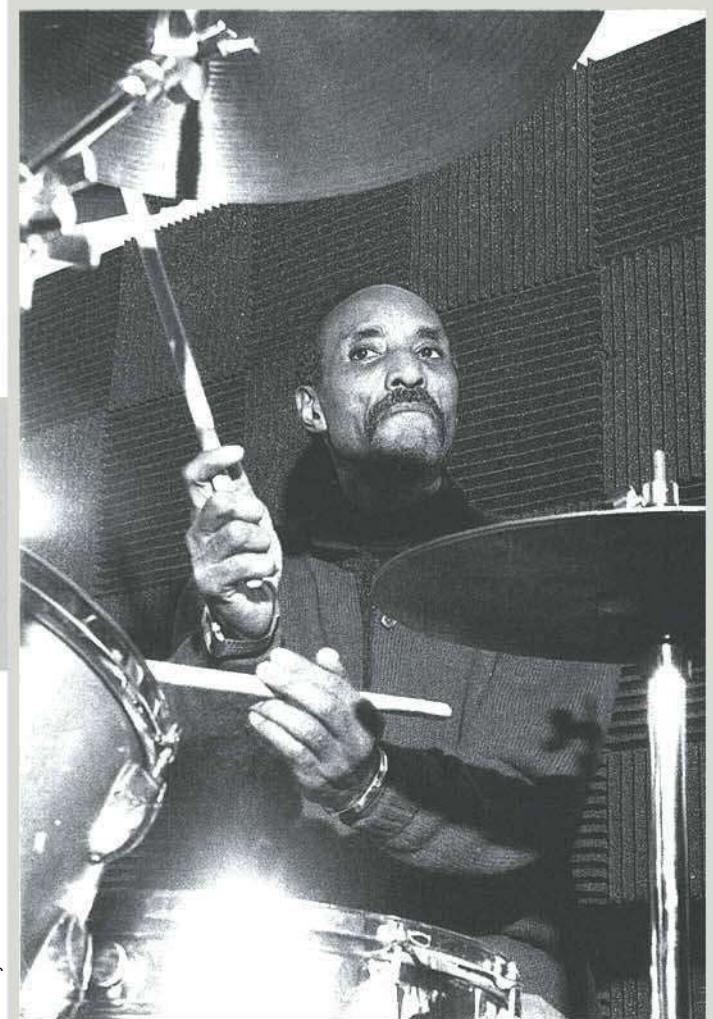


Photo by Lona Foote

the impression of constant motion. His destination is the New School, a progressive college where he sometimes holds classes. His errand today is to deliver a promo pack to pianist Joanne Brackeen. Joanne had phoned Frederick to ask a favor: The jazz band workshop she teaches is working on a difficult composition of hers, "African Aztec," and since Frederick had recorded it with her, would he play it with her to give students an idea of how to approach the piece?

Bounding out of the New School's elevator, Frederick is delighted to find his long-time friend who's "like a father" to him, the legendary trumpet-master, Dr. Donald Byrd. They excitedly exchange greetings then get right into their beloved topic of jazz and all relating to it. Working on a second doctorate, Byrd is constantly collecting information on the history of the music he lives and loves. Whipping out a portable cassette recorder and handing it to Frederick, he rasps, "Tell me about Klook [drummer Kenny Clarke]." Gladly accepting, Frederick consumes the gadget, lifting the mic' close to his lips, and he rapid-fire on Klook's riding technique: He put that thing in with the elbow: ding ding-a-ding.... Everyboy I ever saw who rode like that did not strike the cymbal straight on and stiff. It was like *this*." He demonstrates the elbow leaning into the beat, leading the arm in a sweep across the cymbal. "Max, Philly Joe, and others were coming off of that," he continues. "Max?" Byrd exclaims. "Oh, yeah. Max is deep Klook," laughs Frederick.

Inside the rehearsal room, Joanne Brackeen sits at the piano with four students accompanying her. She introduces Frederick, and he leaps onto the throne without even waiting for the hi-hats to be set up. The players dive headlong into the complex chart. It's tough reading with constant shifts in rhythm and texture. That instant devilish smile snaps onto Frederick's face as he sways to the pulse, eyes glued to the chart, snaking between sections that segue between Afro-

Cuban grooves, to swing, to angular tutti figures. "Where's the drummer?" he calls while the tune is still in motion. The young student switches places with Frederick and picks up in the middle of the chart. It's a bit unnerving for the young player to have Frederick Waits standing over his shoulder. Frederick continually leans to the student's ear, rapidly firing out suggestions. The drummer holds his own but is clearly a bit frazzled. The tune halts, then Frederick puts his hands on the student's shoulders and loudly announces, "I love this, guy because I know he really wants to play this. Right now, I'm afraid he has got a bit of an attitude problem. But once he gets through that, I know he's going to be time."

A cloud of stunned confusion lingers in the room; no one is immediately sure how to take the remark. The drummer accepts it politely but is understandably a tad piqued. Without pausing to explain further, Frederick grips the drummer's shoulders in encouragement and bolts out of the session. Taken out of context, a sensitive student may have felt Frederick's announcement was brash—that is, if they couldn't see the ghost of Papa Jo slam the door behind him.

Once again, Frederick is sprinting down the street, leaning forward with a look that says, "I have a million vital errands to do today." "When I first came to New York," he recalls, "I was working with Ray Bryant in New Jersey. Jo Jones was standing in

the wings of the theater listening. 'Yeah, young stuff,' he said, 'Check me out.' He gave me his number and I called. He used to say, 'Don't you come by my house without your tape recorder! I taped us playing or sometimes he just talked to me about life, how to be a better person. He was an

any problem with someone asking him if he minds trying something different.

"When I was young, I had to be cocky enough or confident enough to say, 'Yeah, I can *do it*,' but if I knew something wasn't happening or was wrong, I knew I had to have the

humbleness to try to play what someone might suggest. Even with McCoy Tyner, he would rarely ask for something *specific*, but occasionally he might say something like, 'This is a little bit heavy; lighten it up a bit.' Okay, I'd search my instrument to find other ways to make it happen. So when I came to this kid today and said, 'Hey, man lighten up a little so you can hear the piano, because that's what you're playing with,' and he says, 'Well, I don't feel it like that...' What I'm trying to say to him is that it's not a jam session, it's a *school*! It's not a date either. If it was, they would fire him. So I figured I had to give him love, and the only way I could love him was to say, 'You've got a real attitude that you've got to deal with, young fella. I love you, let me try to teach you

later. Right now, you don't have the humbleness to come down and try to do what I asked you to do. Whether you thought it was right or wrong, *try it!* You can't just be there to have fun or do what you want to do. *That's not school.*"

Even though he has had a 30-year plus career making history with a long roster of jazz, Motown, and blues greats, you can't talk drums and drums alone with Frederick. Technique? Patterns of practice? He

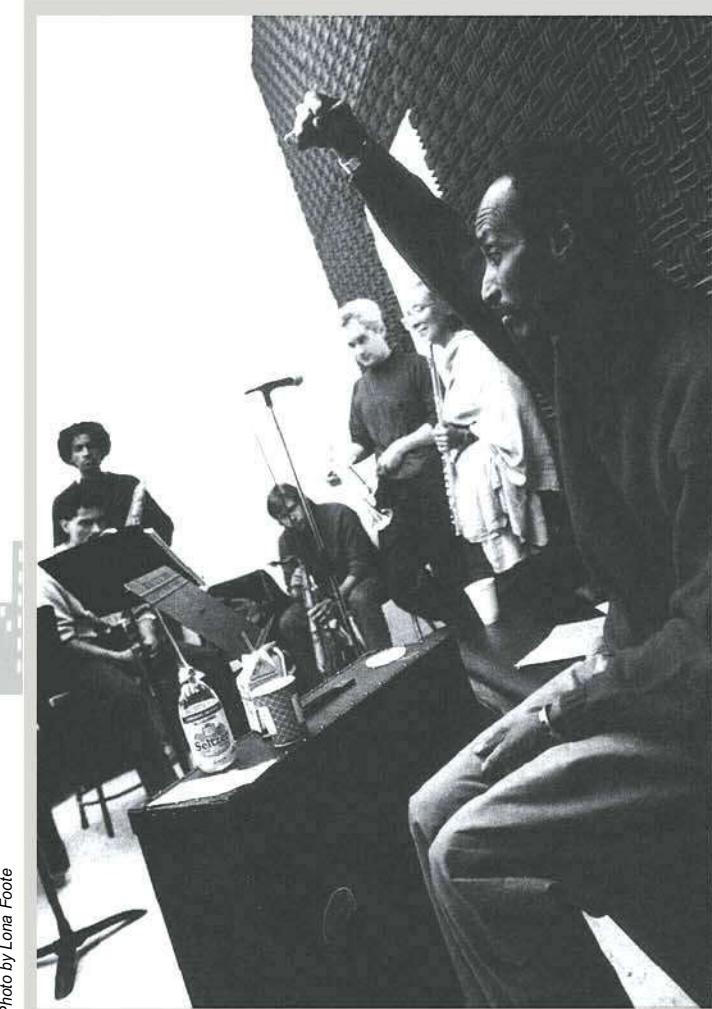


Photo by Lona Foote

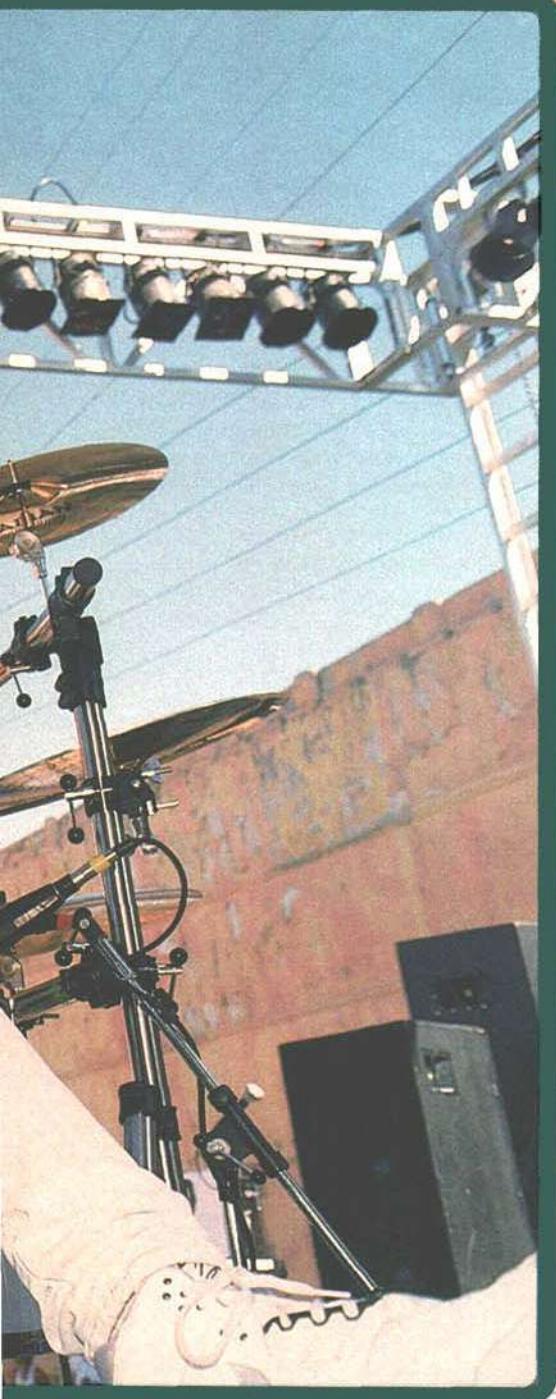
incredible old man. He really loved us and loved this music. You don't really find that kind of passion and love any more. That's why I said to that guy today, 'Hey, man, I love you; I hope I can teach you and deal with you again in the future.' I feel that I can really help that kid because I can tell that he really wants to play, but he has got to let it *out* so that he can let it *in*. When he frees up, then he'll play all that stuff he hears—by nature. And at that time, he won't have

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by Robyn Flans

Deen



Deen Castronovo is one of those people an interviewer wishes readers could have the benefit of hearing tell their story. Deen talks about everything—his wife Shelly, becoming a Christian, his work—with infectious enthusiasm, laughter, and delight. It seems like Deen can't say it loud enough: "I'm one happy guy!"

In the work department, he's happy because Bad English—John Waite fronting with lead vocals, Jonathan Cain and Neal Schon, formerly of Journey, on keyboards and guitar, respectively, and bassist Ricky Phillips from the Babys—are a minute away from being a major arena act.

On stage, Deen's spark also spirits the band. He gives each player what he needs to do his job and each song whatever it needs. On the middle break on "Heaven," he's up on his feet, pounding the toms emphatically, his wild curly hair going everywhere. On the ballad "Price Of Love," Deen lays back just a tad and perfectly punctuates John Waite's gut-wrenching performance with big dramatic tom fills, emphasizing the emotional but intelligent lyrics. And then there's Deen's solo, where he continues to throw his sticks in the air as he has all night. That aspect of his playing is beyond showmanship: It's part of his playing technique and is as steady and nearly as frequent as his bass drum beats, which he sets off like cannons shooting at the speed of light. At one of the band's rehearsals, road manager Chris Arnstein put it succinctly when he said, "The most amazing thing about Deen are those feet of his. The first time I heard him play double bass, it was so fast I kept walking over to the sides of the speakers to check it out."

And for all of the above reasons, the more seasoned musicians in Bad English are crazy about Deen. It was Neal Schon who recognized the talent and followed through by introducing Deen to the band. Jonathan Cain says, "He's a true spark. When John and I got together, we said we needed a young person in the band. We wanted somebody with that fire. When Deen came along, it was just exactly the way we thought of it, but even better, because it turns out he has a great voice, too. And he's got this great personality to go along with it. He's a Christian, and he's always on W, like Keith Moon. A band is like a family; there has to be that comradery. It's great, because when it gets too heavy, Deen will just cut up on us."

Describing their roles in the band, John Waite says, "This 23-year-old is tremendous! He's really my favorite drummer in the entire world, and he's a lovely guy. He plays everything with the most incredible time, and he's absolutely staggering. That was the cornerstone of the band, really. Jonathan has a great overview of the sound and the arrangement, Ricky sort of hones it all into one place, and Deen is a fireball behind the kit. Neal and I are just airborne," he laughs.

Fireball, indeed. Read Deen's words with the exuberance with which he speaks them. "I'm having so much fun," he gushes. "I just know where it came from, and I'm so thankful. The role of rock star isn't me. I just want to play drums, earn a living for my family, and have a blast, and that's what I'm doing."

Castronovo

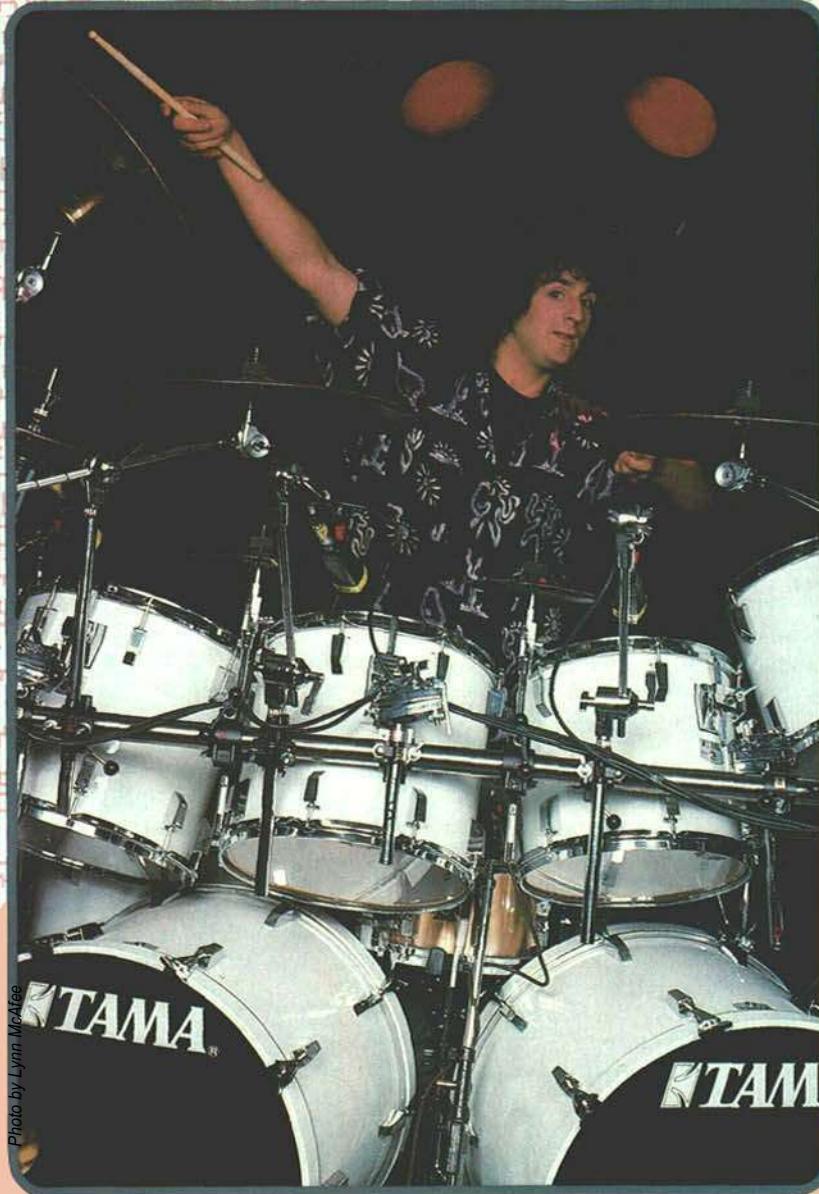


Photo by Lynn MacFee

RF: How exactly did Bad English come about for you?

DC: I was living in San Francisco and working with Tony MacAlpine, and we were kind of on hiatus because we were writing material. I was going back and forth from San Francisco to Salem, Oregon, where I live, and I got a call from Mike Varney asking me to do an album for another band, called Cacophony. I went to start rehearsing with those guys to do an album, and when I walked into the rehearsal room, there was Neal Schon playing with Tony's keyboardist, Mark Robertson. They were writing a song for Tony, and Neal said, "Sit down and let's jam." I was flipping out, needless to say; it was the biggest thing that had ever happened to me. I was jamming out with the guy, and when Mark left for a little bit Neal said, "Hey, if I ever need a drummer, I want your number." I was bouncing off the walls by this time. I figured, "Well, I'll give him my number; I'll never hear from the guy again, but it was sure nice to meet Neal Schon." I went home and told everybody! Then one night, I was sitting at home with my wife, and we had the phone machine on, and Neal called and left a message. He said, "I'm not sure if I'm going to play in this band, but they're looking for a drummer, and I suggested to them that you audition. So they'll fly you down and we'll go down together. I'll do it if you do it," was basically what he said. Wow! We went down to the audition, and when everybody started walking in, I was flipping out. We played for a couple of hours. They were writing songs, and I was just playing along. I was coming up with stuff and it was, "Yeah, I like that," or "Try something different," or "Try something like this." I think I wrote "Restless Ones" with them, "Rockin' Horse," "Best I Got," and a few others that didn't make the album. It was a lot of fun. They were just trying to get to know me.

"As soon as I got done with drugs,

RF: In what period of time?

DC: Four days. Then I went home because they hadn't decided yet. They tried out maybe ten or fifteen more drummers after that. Then they called me back and said, "It's time." We went into a demo studio, Pacific Sound, in Chatsworth, and started doing demos of all the material we had written. We were there for a month.

RF: Was there ever a feeling of intimidation?

DC: Oh, yeah. The first day I walked in, I was scared, big time. I had seen these guys in coliseums, hundreds of rows up watching John Waite.

RF: How do you audition under those adverse circumstances?

DC: Lots of prayer. Neal obviously had some faith in me, and I've got faith in myself. My family knows I can do it and my attitude was, "I'll just do my best, and if I don't get it, I'll go back with Tony," although it was kind of understood that if I left Tony, I was gone. It wasn't said, but it was implied by Mike Varney.

RF: What goes through your brain in that kind of situation, and how do you calm yourself down and play well while you're nervous?

DC: Well, I'm a Christian, number one, so a lot of it has to do with the Lord and thinking along those lines. It's a very calming thing. There was lots of prayer before I went down to L.A., lots of prayer while I was there, lots of reading and studying. It was, "Hey, they're ordinary people doing a job." I'm in awe of them because I respect them so much as musicians; I revere every one of those guys, they're fantastic.

I've learned more in this band than in anything I've ever done. Even playing straight 4/4 is more fun to me than riffing and doing all that crap. This way it's, "I'm playing for John Waite." If he doesn't feel comfortable tapping his foot, I might as well give it up. I was nervous, but confident. It wasn't, "I can do it, I'm the best," but it was, "I will do the best I can, and that's the best I can do."

RF: Did you get a sense of what they wanted right away?

DC: Pretty much. I knew from everybody's past that they like a real solid rock drummer; they wanted somebody who was straight ahead. I'm a big Steve Smith fan, and at first I thought, "Maybe they want that kind of player," but they didn't. John's the singer, not Steve Perry. He knew what he wanted, and one of the things he said was, "I want a lazy snare."

RF: What's a lazy snare?

DC: John is the kind of singer who likes having the ride cymbal, hi-hat, and the bass drum right on the beat, but the snare held back just a little bit, just so it's danceable—not speeding up, and not right on it—just a little lazy.

RF: So when he said, "a lazy snare..."

DC: I didn't know what to do. I was thinking, "Okay. But what's a lazy snare?"

RF: How did you figure out what it was?

DC: By talking to people, and by watching John. John said, "Watch my heel. Where my heel goes is where I want that snare drum," so when we're playing, I watch his heel on a lot of stuff. In the studio, I had a click going, so I'd just play with the click, but I'd always hold the snare back just a little bit, and he

my drumming improved 1,000%."

loved it. I like playing with a click track, by the way.

RF: Why? How much experience did you have with a click before this record?

DC: That was the first time I had ever played with a click, but it was so much easier with it than without it, because I didn't have to concentrate on time; I could concentrate on whatever I felt.

RF: Did you do anything growing up that prepared you for it, like playing with a metronome or really working on your time?

DC: No, nothing. It's the easiest thing. It's like when you're in a car and you turn the turn signal on and you start playing beats to the thing. If you can't hear it, you know you're on it. The click would be playing 8ths or quarters, and if I couldn't hear it, I knew where it was. It was so much fun. I remember talking to Jonathan, and he said, "Larrie Londin is a master at that; he can play above it, behind it..." and I thought, "Maybe I should start messing with that," so I bought a *Dr. Beat*, but I never used it until we went into the studio. I just plugged my *Dr. Beat* into my 'phones, and it was so easy.

RF: Doesn't a click make it hard to play a lazy snare?

DC: No, because I'm playing with the click on the hi-hat and bass drum, and the snare goes just a little behind. It's just a little push and pull.

RF: Were there other things besides the lazy snare that you were aware of during those four days?

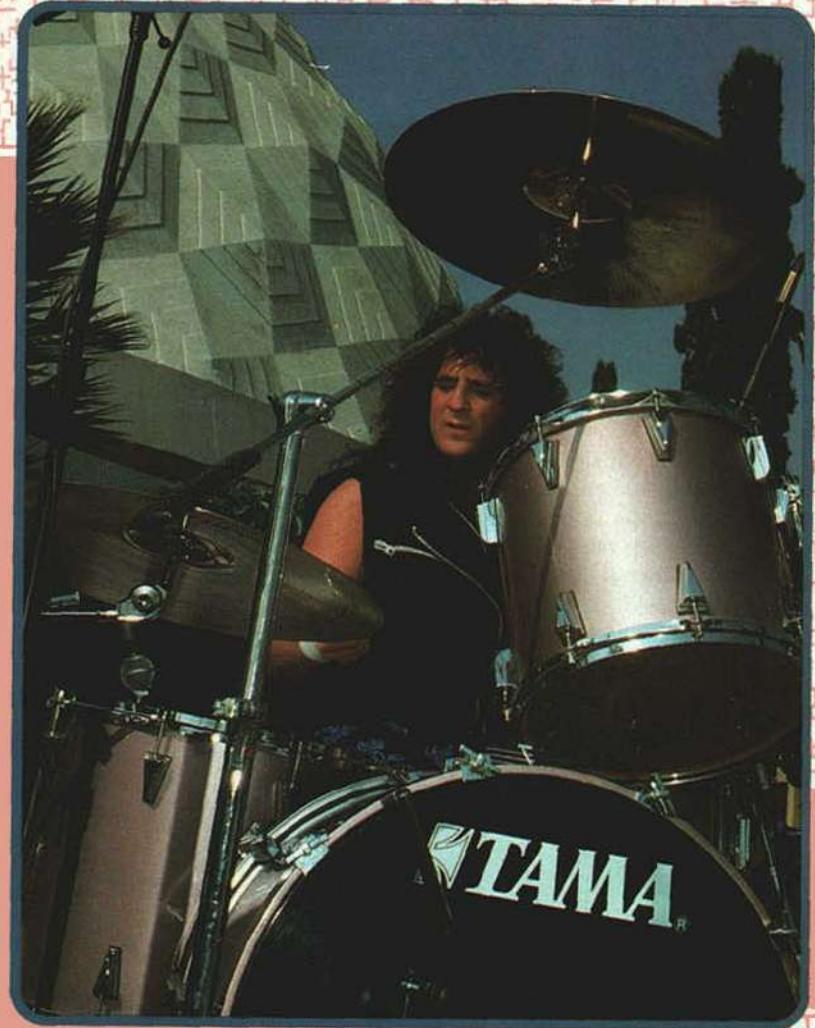
DC: I had to learn to not be so lick-oriented. Tony's band was real fusion-oriented; there were a lot of chops required, and I could do whatever I wanted to do. It was great; I was able to make up my own thing—anything I wanted to do. But for this, that wasn't it. It was, "You're in a band, you're part of a team; you're not the star. You play this."

RF: One of the guys said that when there would be tension in the studio, you would come in with your sense of humor and joke them out of it.

DC: It was really neat. Those guys are very serious, and they're always on the edge. I think with me in the band, not to blow my own horn, but I take a little bit of the edge off. "This is fun, guys; it ain't work. Let's make music and have fun." Being the successes they've been, you lose that I think. They've forgotten what it's like to have something brand new and exciting. When they see how I react to stuff, I think they think, "That's cool." They like seeing that. It's like one day at the beginning, we were talking to [producer] Richie Zito, and he was saying, "The album is at 66, and the single is at such and such," and John Waite said, "Yeah, that's really great," and I said, "Man, that's unreal!" Richie said, "Oh yeah, that's right, everything is new and exciting to you, isn't it?" I'm always hyper. There's never a day when I'm really down. Why should I be? As far as I'm concerned, I'm in the best band in the world, I'm with the best musicians I could possibly be with, it's a great job, I've got a great wife, everything's perfect. Why be sad?

RF: Was there a time when it wasn't so good?

DC: Oh yes, with Tony's band. I was starving, but I didn't care. I loved what I was doing. My wife owns a nursing home, but it was just being built and they were just making ends meet, and I was in San Fran-



cisco making no money. The band was on PolyGram, but we weren't getting a salary or anything. I was living on macaroni and cheese and my faith in the Lord. So it was, "I'm here to work, but I'm not here to live in luxury. This is something I have to go through. At least I'm doing something. I'm very lucky to be in this spot." And when this came along, it was, "Wow, I'm really lucky!" Needless to say, the food is better. [laughs] So there were hard times, and it was tough. You can get bummed out, but you just keep moving on because you're playing, and that's what counts at the time.

RF: Let's go back to the studio. By now you were probably not as intimidated as you had been when you walked in, but it's no secret that these guys have strong opinions. In fact, one of them said Richie Zito was as much a referee as a producer. Did that leave any space for you?

DC: It was all still a learning experience for me. I kept out of a lot of the stuff, but I was always there. I gave my opinion when I wanted to give it, but it was never real harsh. I was a member of the band. I'd say, "Let's try this," or "Let's try that." As far as drums, I had a lot of freedom to do what I wanted within a certain structure. It was 4/4, so I'd figure out something that sounded good. "Don't Walk Away" was done in the demo studio, and it came out so good that they put it on the album. I didn't know what to do; I could have played real straight, but—call it divine inspiration—this beat came out. It was spur of the moment.

RF: Can you explain what you did?

DC: No, I don't read. I didn't take extensive lessons. Whatever comes out, comes out. I don't know how to say, "That's what this is and that's what this is." I was taught it, but I never learned it. I used to take lessons from a guy named Mel Brown, and we'd just go in and jam for an hour. He's a jazz drummer, and he used to play with the Temptations and stuff like that. He would try to show me how to read, and I just didn't want to do that. I wanted to be in Kiss. These guys in Bad English hate that. It's "The Who, man." Keith Moon, to me, is still one of the greatest drummers, but I was a

continued on page 92

MD's Festival

Modern Drummer's Festival Weekend '89 proved to be a memorable and unique drum-oriented event. Held Saturday, September 16 and Sunday, September 17 at Montclair State College, in Upper Montclair, New Jersey, the Festival brought a stellar array of world-class drummers and percussionists before a capacity audience of drumming enthusiasts in both clinic and concert performances. That audience included drummers who had traveled from virtually all of the United States—including Alaska—as well as Puerto Rico, Germany, and New Zealand!

Following highly successful one-day Festivals in 1987 and '88, 1989's Festival was expanded to a weekend-long event, adding to its excitement and educational value. And those who came with high expectations were not disappointed. Each attendee was met with a souvenir bag containing almost five pounds of product literature and promotional gifts from all of the corporate spon-



The dynamic performance of Soh Daiko set the tone for Saturday's show.

sors, along with a drummer's sweat towel compliments of MD. (This last item immediately proved useful, since the audience was hit by a surprise rain-

storm while standing in line for Saturday's show.)

Following brief introductory comments from MD Managing Editor (and Festival Coordinator) Rick Van Horn and Editor/Publisher Ron Spagnardi, the Festival got off to a rousing start—perhaps to the surprise of many of the staunch drumset players in the audience—with a performance by the taiko drumming group Soh Daiko. Sporting blazing red oriental

garb, the 11-member ensemble combined drumming and dance in a spectacular way. Their three-song set included the use of several different-sized drums, metallic instruments, and even a bit of group shouting that really caught the audience off-guard! Soh Daiko's performance showed the powerful effect that many drummers working together can have on an audience, and the crowd responded with a standing ovation.

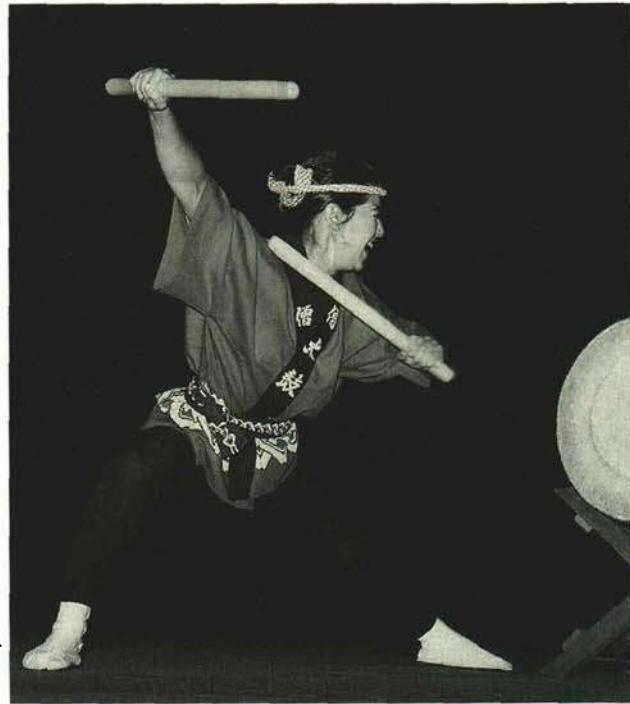


Photo by Rick Malkin

Weekend '89

The second performer on Saturday was Chad Wackerman, who began his portion of the show with an excellent solo, and then a lesson on how to approach playing odd meters. Chad's mastery of odd times was apparent, especially when he demonstrated playing time and soloing in 21! Chad then finished off his clinic by bringing out his brother Bob, who plays bass, and renowned guitarist Allan Holdsworth, for a set of world-class fusion playing. In this setting Chad was able to musically apply many of his techniques, including some fine double-pedal work.

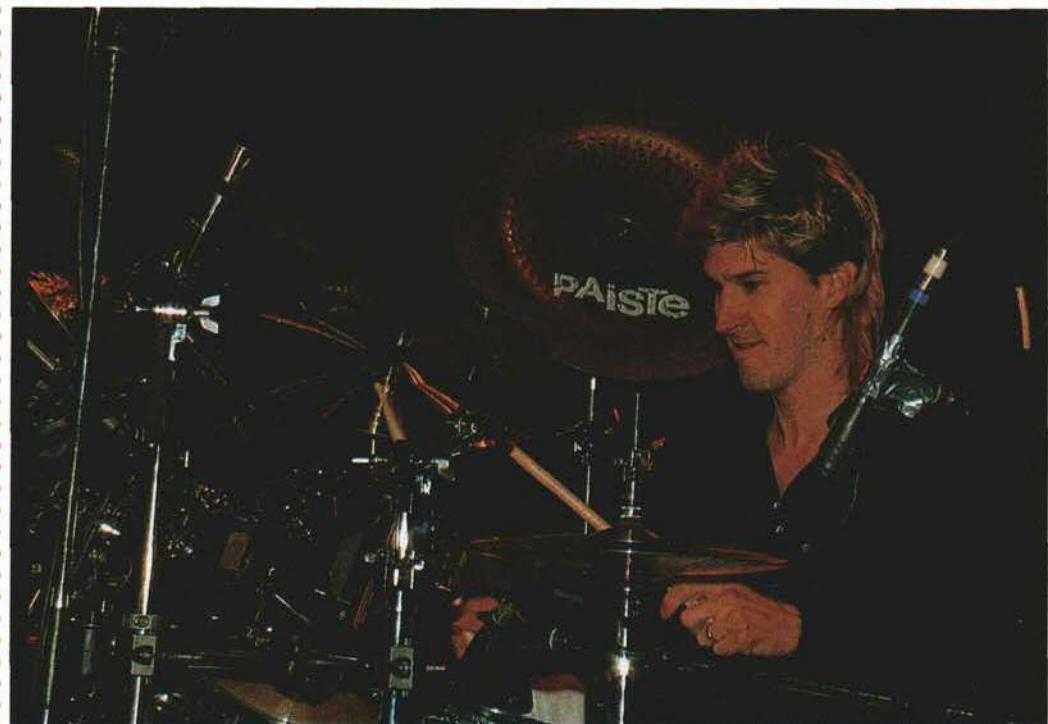


Photo by Rick Malkin



Photo by Lissa Wales

Allan Holdsworth, Chad Wackerman, and Bob Wackerman.



Photo by Lissa Wales

Drum Workshop's John Good (at left) acted as liaison for the group.



Photo by Rick Malkin

Editor/Publisher Ron Spagnardi and Associate Publisher Isabel Spagnardi greeted the audience on behalf of Modern Drummer.



Photo by Rick Malkin

MD Managing Editor Rick Van Horn coordinated the Festival and opened each day's show.

MD's Festival

Next on the bill was long-time Billy Joel drummer, Liberty DeVitto. Set up sideways to the audience so that everyone could see exactly what he was doing, Liberty performed to a tape of many Joel classics. At one point Liberty surprised everyone by asking for a volunteer from the audience. A young man by the name of Joe came up on stage (which took a lot of courage in front of 1,000 drummers) and took on the role of studio drummer, while Liberty played record producer. By doing this, Liberty gave the audience a chance to see the types of things that he has to deal with in a recording situation. Both Liberty's playing and personality were well-received.



Photo by Rick Mankin



Liberty was joined backstage by Tama's Joe Hibbs and Sabian's Robert Zildjian.

Photo by Lissa Wales

Weekend '89

The technique fans in the audience were satisfied when the next drummer, Danny Gottlieb, performed. Danny came out and demonstrated some fantastic chops, both with his hands and feet. He opened with a very musical solo, which included a lot of dynamics and his trademark use of cymbals, plus some tremendously clean single-stroke rolls. Then he came out to the front of the stage and demonstrated some of the concepts he used to develop his hands (using a lovely Ludwig piccolo snare). Danny was quick to credit his mentor,

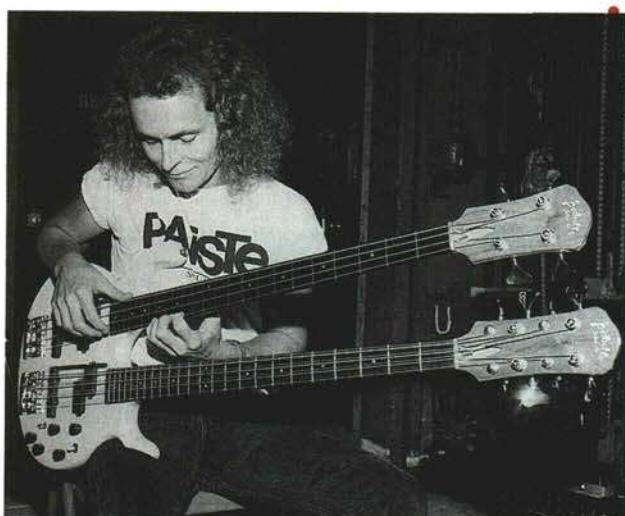
Joe Morello, for all his help and guidance over the years.

Danny ended his performance with some "musical duets" with bassist and long-time collaborator Mark Egan. For this segment Danny switched to a standing position, using a large selection of Paiste's new Signature Logo cymbals and some electronic drums. The sound these two fine musicians created was inspiring, proving that Danny's great technique is combined with some very good musical taste.



Photo by Lissa Wales

Photo by Rick Malkin



Mark Egan's unique bass stylings complemented Danny's creative playing.

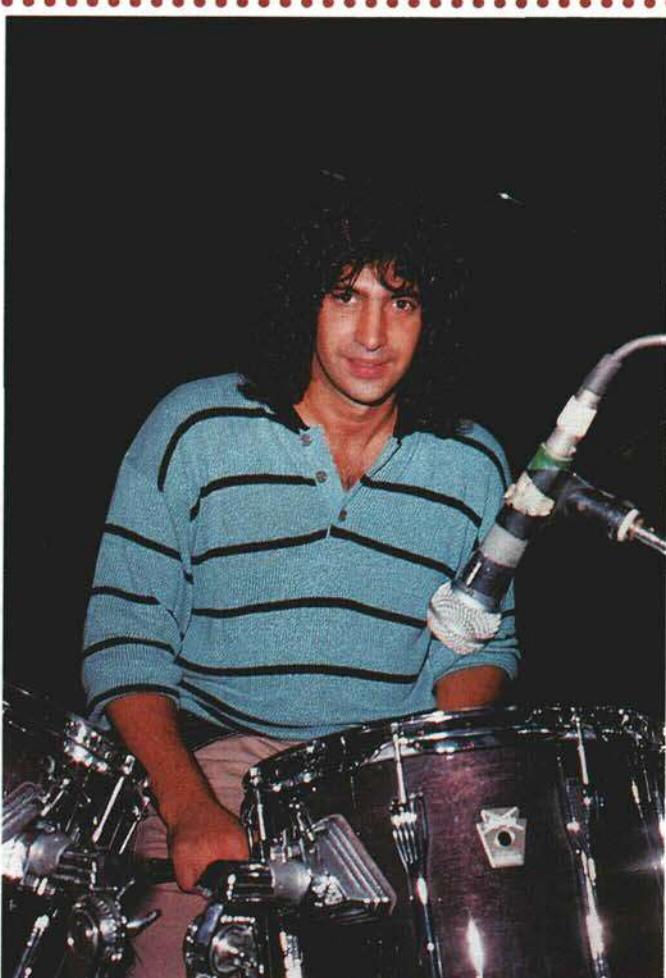


Photo by Rick Malkin



Photo by Lissa Wales

Danny was assisted by Paiste's Rich Mangicaro (above) and Ludwig's Jim Catalano (below).



Photo by Lissa Wales

MD's Festival

Day one of Festival Weekend '89 ended with a very rare performance by the group Eyewitness. This group's performances are rare mainly because the band's members, Steve Khan (guitar), Anthony Jackson (bass), Manolo Badrena (percussion), and Dave Weckl are among the

most in-demand musicians in the world. Weckl is no stranger to *MD* readers, and his performance with Eyewitness revealed some sides of his playing that even further demonstrated his tremendous facility on the instrument. Because of the band's looser structure, Dave was free



Photo by Rick Malkin

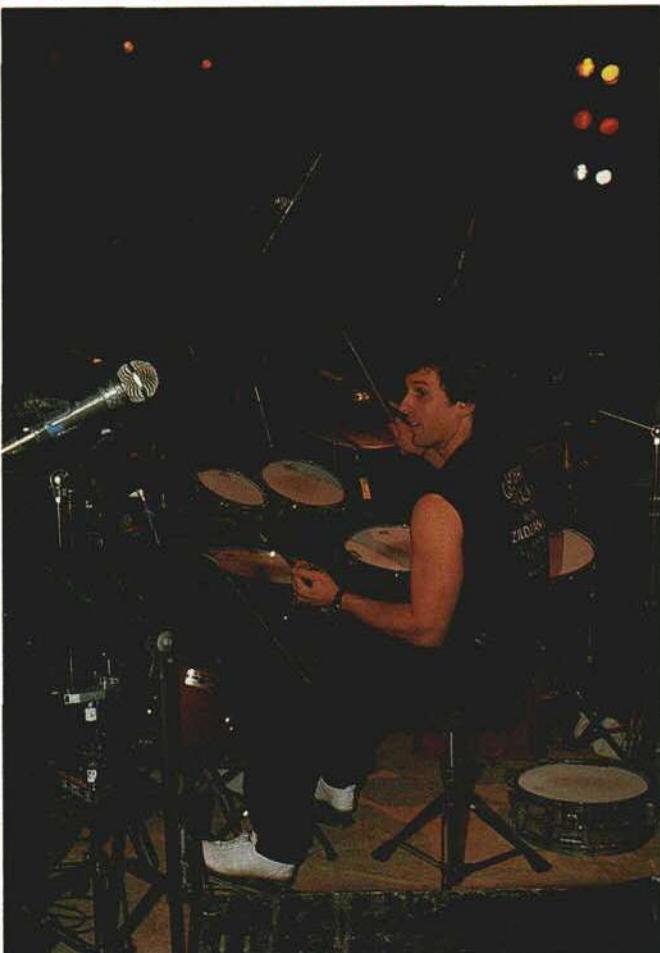


Photo by Rick Malkin

Eyewitness (left to right): Manolo Badrena, Anthony Jackson, Steve Khan, and Dave Weckl.

to stretch out in a few more ways than he normally does with Chick Corea, and seeing what he came up with in this situation was quite interesting. Speaking of interesting, percussionist Manolo Badrena treated the audience to quite a sight: With his odd array of percussive toys, he seemed to never

stop experimenting and trying out different sounds (and facial expressions). At the end of the band's set, there was little doubt in anyone's mind why Dave Weckl has been voted as the number-one Electric Jazz Drummer in *MD*'s Readers Poll the last three years.



Photo by Lissa Wales

Kelly Firth, Dave, Gregg Bissonette, Zildjian's Lennie DiMuzio, and Tracy Firth.

Weekend '89

Day two of the Festival began with a heavy dose of electronics from drummers Michael Shrieve and David Beal. The stage was covered with equipment, including two drumsets (one in an enclosed cage with suspended cymbals), electronic pad setups, and racks of outboard effects. Shrieve and Beal played together using different combinations of instruments, and the sounds they were trig-

gering from both their pad setups and drums were very unique. Both players also fielded several questions from the audience, giving out helpful tips ranging from triggering and sampling to how to get started with electronics. Their performance ended with some fine acoustic drumset duets.

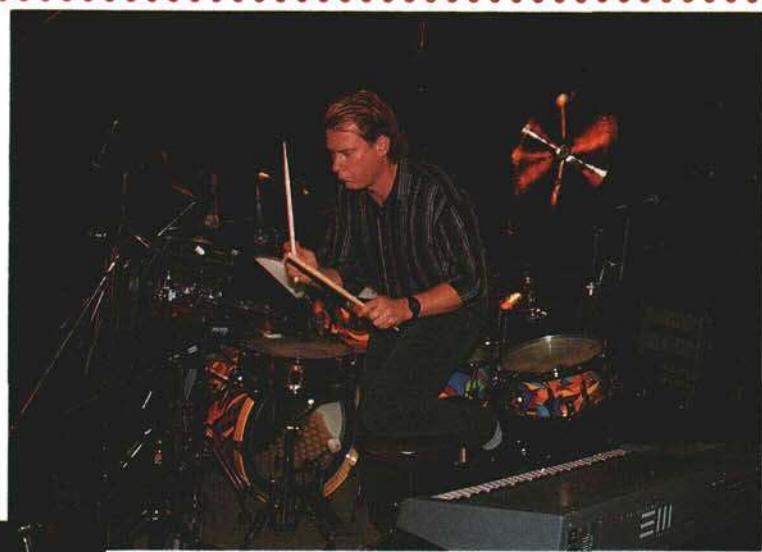


Photo by Rick Malkin

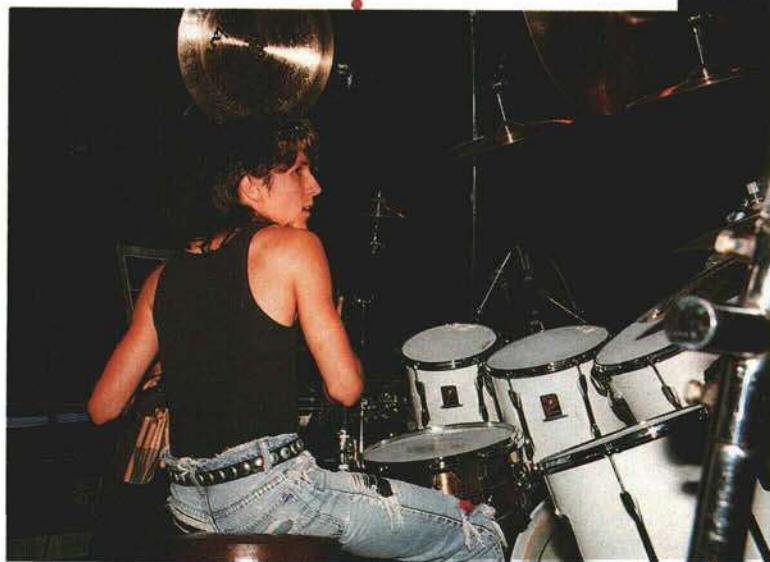


Photo by Rick Malkin



Photo by Lissa Wales

Premier artists and staff (from left): David Beal, Joe Franco, Tom Meyers, Jeff Hasselberger, Chuck Griggs, and Michael Shrieve.



Photo by Rick Malkin

MD's Festival



Photo by Rick Malkin

To get an idea how popular the next performer was with the audience, his drums were applauded when they were rolled out! The reception was for Gregg Bissonette, who came out and wowed the audience with his playing and with his sheer love of the instrument, which came across in everything he said. Gregg opened up with a long solo that involved many different feels, tremendous double-bass technique, some Latin playing, and even some fine brush work. Next Gregg played along to a tape that further demonstrated his abilities as a total drummer and musician. His performance opened the eyes of many drummers in the audience.

After Gregg's performance, the *Modern Drummer* Readers



Photo by Lissa Wales

Gregg was joined by Pearl's Ken Austin (at left) and Zildjian's Mike Morse.

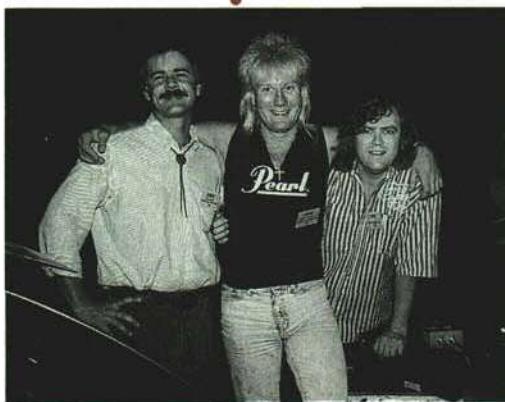


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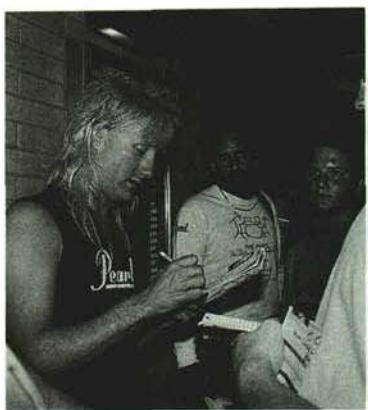


Photo by Lissa Wales

Carl Palmer gave a blazing snare drum demonstration.

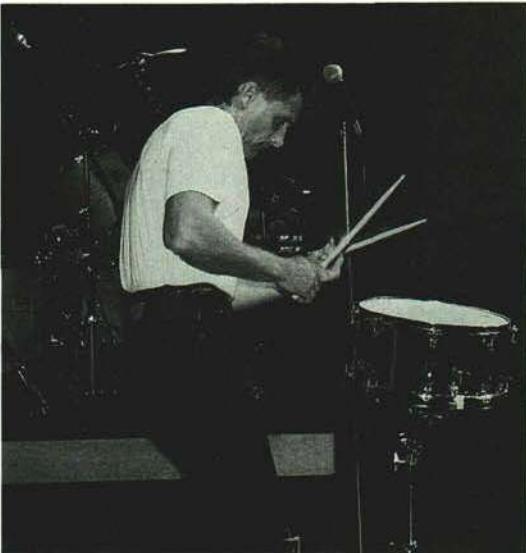


Photo by Lissa Wales

Weekend '89

Poll Hall Of Fame award was presented to 1989's winner, Carl Palmer. To give Carl his award, Ron Spagnardi brought out Senior Editor Rick Mattingly and 1988's Hall Of Fame award winner, Joe Morello. The audience showed their approval with a standing ovation. Carl then surprised everybody by playing a blistering rudimental solo on a Remo snare drum, afterwards signing it and raffling it off to an audience member, saying, "Remo's a good friend; he won't mind."

The excitement continued with the next performer, Vinnie Colaiuta. During Vinnie's solo performance, screams of approval from the audience came from all sides. Looking across the sea of heads during Vinnie's solo was interesting because most were either open-mouthed or shaking in disbelief. The sheer technical ability of this drummer was simply astounding, from his independence and groove playing to his double-pedal chops. He simply offered up more drumming ideas than could be taken in, and the audience responded with yet another standing ovation.



Photo by Rick Malkin

Carl happily received his 1989 Readers Poll Hall Of Fame award from '88 recipient Joe Morello.



Photo by Rick Malkin

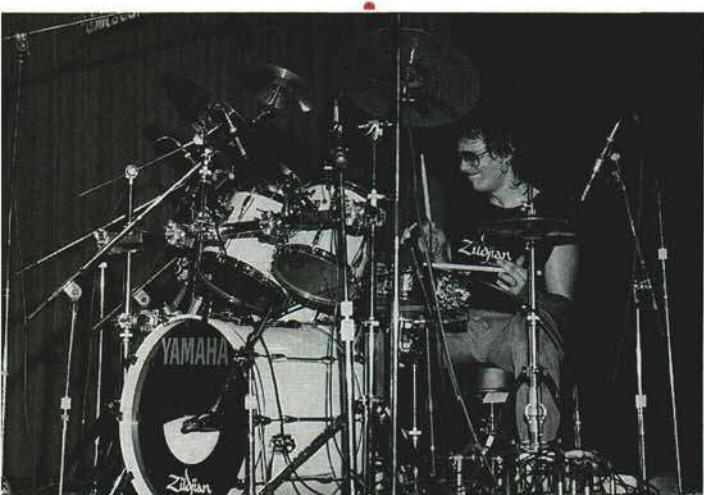


Photo by Rick Malkin



Photo by Rick Malkin

Vinnie Colaiuta and MD Senior Editor Rick Mattingly compared notes backstage.

MD's Festival Weekend '89

Photo by Rick Malkin



The last performer for the Festival was jazz great Jack DeJohnette. Jack was accompanied by guitarist John Abercrombie and bassist Gary Peacock for a set of fine instrumental music. Jack's loose and unique style of drumming grooved hard, and he also switched over to the keyboard for a couple of tunes, which pointed out the versatility of this talented musician. His drumming was what most wanted to see, though, and Jack didn't disappoint anyone with his powerful accompaniment playing as well as with

his solos. (During Jack's set, several of the other Festival participants could be seen checking him out from behind the curtain, including Joe Morello, Danny Gottlieb, Gregg Bissonette, and Vinnie Colaiuta.) Jack and friends got a huge response, and they were brought back for an encore—all to the delight of the audience.

Throughout both days, thousands of dollars worth of door prizes were given away, through the courtesy of the many corporate sponsors of the performing artists. *MD* also presented special "Long-Distance Traveler" awards to the audience members who had traveled the farthest to be at the Festival.

Many of the performing artists—along with other drumming luminaries who were present in the audience—came out front each day to sign autographs and talk drums. Souvenir T-shirts, *MD* method books, and selected *MD* back issues were on sale, and food service was provided for the comfort and convenience of the 1,000 drummers that attended each day.

At the conclusion of Sunday's performance, the audience seemed reluctant to leave.

Many stayed to try to get a few more autographs; others just wanted to keep the great moments they had experienced at the Festival in their consciousness for a few moments longer. And as Ron Spagnardi shook hands with departing attendees in the lobby, the comment he heard most often was: "Great show! When's next year's gonna be?"

Photo by Rick Malkin



John Abercrombie, Jack DeJohnette, and Gary Peacock.

Photo by Rick Malkin



On hand to support Jack were Sonor's Bob Saydowski, Jr. and Karl Dustman (from left), and Sabian's Robert Zildjian.

Photo by Lissa Wales



Sound is vibration, and vibration is energy. Life energy is vibration and sound, also. So, for us, sound is part of a very deep, basic truth. We are not the only ones who feel like this. There are so many musical-minded drummers who get the same exciting feeling from playing their cymbals. It's not just the sound. It's the vibration, the touch, how it feels, and how it speaks to the drummer. It's a wonderful feeling to produce something, hand it over to the drummers, and see them get the same response. There's a deep truth behind it.

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CYMBALS SOUNDS GONGS

Paiste

PAiSTE

CYMBALS SOUNDS GONGS

IAN PAICE

"They are like a whole new generation of cymbals — for every generation of players. There is one cymbal for every style of music."

RICKY LAWSON

"They sound wonderful, really. These cymbals feel very natural and they speak immediately."

FREDY STUDER

"Making these cymbals is like making music, it's art. With these sounds, Paiste jumped above its own shadow into a complete new cymbal world."

PIERRE FAVRE

"These cymbal sounds will inspire drummers to tune their instruments accordingly. The sound of the drums has to be richer to complement the cymbals."

TERRY BOZZIO

"I've never heard anything like this! These sounds are hypnotic, it's a big mystery."

STEVE JORDAN

"I am impressed by the dynamic range. I can play soft and bring out the actual beauty of the cymbal. I can play loud and it does not sound harsh but just like a big wall of sound. Usually you can not get both out of a cymbal."

ED MANN

"These cymbals respond quickly and evenly over a wide range. Because the harmonics are so clear, it is possible for the drummer/percussionist to create new extremes in sound and color."

RONALD SHANNON JACKSON

"It's like when they went from black & white to technicolor. These cymbal sounds generate the same step."

JON HISEMAN

"Marvelous! Very musical sounding cymbals with a beautiful transparency."

DANNY GOTTLIEB

"Congratulations! It's got to be the fullest range of sound I've ever heard. Now there's an even wider set of tonal colors to choose from."

SHEILA E.

"Crispy, crispy, crispy. They're like right there in your face, and I don't have to play them so hard."

STEWART COPELAND

"These cymbals speak very quickly, with power and they have dignity."

ALEX VAN HALEN

"I've waited for a long time for a cymbal like this."

JEFF PORCARO

"Unbelievable! Gorgeous! It's got everything. This is the biggest cymbal innovation I've heard of in my lifetime. It's a cymbal revolution."

CHAD WACKERMAN

"These cymbals speak immediately, and have a brilliant shimmer at the very top end of the sound. I have never heard such beautifully rich sounding cymbals before."

NICKO McBRAIN

"Really serious cymbals. They've got power, volume and real precision and they've got that magic. It's a winner!"

LEON NDUGU CHANCERL

"This is the first cymbal that has a wide dynamic range without being overpowering. They cut through in all dynamic situations with the same clarity. In the studio, they are fantastic."

JIM KELTNER

"They feel like pretty old cymbals. They feel like they have already been broken in — a beautiful, mellow, crystal kind of sound, smooth and thin."

Nº 4,809,581

On March 7, 1989, the United States Patent Office granted Paiste the patent registered under the above number. This patent allows Paiste the exclusive use of the new bronze alloy they invented for the creation of cymbals. For the next 17 years, Paiste is the only cymbal-maker that will supply cymbals made from this new alloy.

The new alloy took 8 years to develop. Traditional Paiste cymbal artistry was taken and applied to the new alloy—to hand craft the most beautiful, sophisticated cymbals—and in 1989 Paiste introduced its *Paiste* line. The new cymbals are made from this bronze alloy—with qualities that go beyond any current material used for cymbals by any cymbal maker—a new era of sound metal, a giant step for the whole family of percussion musical instruments.

The reactions to the new line—from industry specialists, recording engineers, consumers, international top musicians and from music dealers—has been phenomenal. What was clear from the moment the new cymbals were born is now a generally recognized fact: the new Paiste cymbals are the final answer to the needs of today's discerning musicians who look for ultimate sound quality and maximum creative expression.

While Paiste is proud to have generated yet another giant step in the world of cymbals, it is by no means the first time. Numerous international patents in cymbals have been held by Paiste before, and by far the most innovations in cymbals in this century have been brought to you by Paiste.

Paiste...Innovations in step with musicians and their music.

PAiSTE
CYMBALS SOUNDS GONGS

New Tama Hard



Photo by Rick Mattingly

Titan Stilt Stands

Tama's *Titan* hardware line has been an industry leader for years. Massive, solid, and appointed with excellent details and features, *Titan* stands have always represented the state of the art in heavy-duty hardware. Given this situation, and keeping the old adage "if it ain't broke, don't fix it" firmly in mind, one might be inclined to wonder about the new design feature that Tama has just incorporated into the *Titan* series: namely, the ability to tilt each stand at its base. But, never a company to let caution stand in the way of innovation, Tama has released the *Titan Stilt* line.

But is this legitimate innovation, or simply a clever marketing ploy? After all, does anybody really need a stand that can tilt? Characteristically, Tama is quite realistic about this new line's appeal. They realize (and are counting on the fact) that many drummers will be intrigued by the stands' sheer uniqueness. They hope that those drummers will enjoy the "hip" look of having a forest of cymbal and drum stands leaning in towards the drumkit from well outside the "normal" area. Obviously, a large rock kit would look even larger and (perhaps) more impressive with these stands. And no one can dispute that image is a large part of what sells drum equipment.

However, Tama also sincerely believes that there is a practical side to this design. There are those times when the optimum placement of a cymbal or drum is "just beyond" the reach of a straight stand, and yet a boom would be too costly, too large, or for some other reason inappropriate for use. While drummers who have only straight stands would be forced to "live with" a not-quite-perfect placement, Tama feels that the ability of a *Stilt* stand to tilt gives drummers extra positioning flexibility that just might get that cymbal or drum exactly where they want it. Tilting cymbal booms are in the line, too, so the added flexibility of the *Stilt* feature can extend their reach even further.

The tilt is achieved via an independent connection between one of the tripod legs and the central shaft of the stand. This connection allows that one leg to extend out further than the other two, creating an offset tripod and causing the vertical shaft of the stand to tilt in the direction of the extended leg. Since the tilting shaft is supported by the extended leg, the overall stability of the stand is not adversely affected. It's a simple system, and it works admirably.

But one still might ask, how practical is it for the average drummer who may not be concerned with image? Well, I was skeptical about that myself, until I took one of the straight *Stilt* cymbal stands out on a gig with my small club-date kit. I wanted to put a crash cymbal to the right of my floor tom, but I was set up on a very small riser, and my set pretty much covered it from edge to edge. There wasn't any room on the riser to put a cymbal stand where I wanted it. I could have used a boom from the floor itself beside the riser, but I didn't have one with me (and besides, my guitar player was standing there). I found that by using the *Stilt* stand, placed *behind* the floor tom on the riser (where a second floor tom might go) and tilting our and away from the kit, I could get the cymbal suspended to the right of the floor tom where I wanted it. Even if I'd had a boom with me, had I tried to use it from the same position the weighted end would have been pointed back at me and in my way.

I'm a great believer in options. The beauty of equipment that gives you such options is that you can be prepared for almost any eventuality without having to carry extra gear. That's why I feel that the most important aspect of Tama's *Titan Stilt* stands is that the tilting feature is merely an addition to an already tried-and-true hardware design. It's an optional capability that is there if a drummer needs it; all the stands work just fine in the normal, vertical manner as well. Tama feels the same way, since all tom and cymbal stands in the *Titan* line will now include this feature, and will simply be known as *Titan Stilt*.

List price data is as follows: *HC92* Straight Cymbal Stand—\$105.00; *HC93B* Semi-Boom (without weight)—\$125.00; *HC94B* Boom (with weight)—\$138.00; *HC104TB* Telescoping Boom (with weight)—\$155.00; *HW99* Double Tom Stand—\$199.00; and *HW109TS* Short Double Tom Stand—\$175.00.

Lever-Glide Hi-Hat

Tama has also introduced a new hi-hat that incorporates quite a few design changes of its own. Although not included in the *Titan Stilt* series, the new *Lever-Glide* hi-hat does have the capability of tilting slightly at its base, as well. This is achieved in a different manner from the *Stilt* series stands, however. One of the small bars that connects the legs of the tripod to the central shaft is split and slotted. A fitting allows one section of that bar to slide over the other, "telescoping" the bar in or out and placing the tripod leg to which it is attached closer to—or further away from—the central shaft of the hi-hat. This effects the tilt of the central shaft.

Why would anyone want to tilt their hi-hat? There are several reasons. Many drummers have been shifting from 14" hi-hats to 13" or even smaller models in an effort to get a quicker sound. As a result, the edges of their hi-hats are now further away from them, by half an inch or more. In some cases, moving the actual hi-hat stand closer to the drums in order to put the edges back where the drummers are used to having them is impossible, due to conflicts with stand legs. Or it might just be uncomfortable, since that moves the hi-hat pedal and puts the drummer's foot in a new position. A tilting hi-hat allows the base of the hi-hat and the pedal to stay in their original position, while the cymbals are tilted in towards the drummer—putting their edges where the drummer is used to having them. Granted, the plane of the hi-hat cymbals is no longer horizontal; tilting the stand also tilts the cymbals. But this is generally not a

ware

problem once a drummer becomes used to it, and can actually prove to be beneficial for drummers who like to play Gadd/Weckl-style double-stroke patterns from hi-hat to snare.

Another major new feature incorporated into the *Lever-Glide* hi-hat is a return spring fitted onto the pedal itself, in addition to the traditional internal spring that moves the hi-hat rod. This spring-loaded pedal is extra-quick and smooth to operate; it almost *throws* your foot back up. In combination with the stand's internal spring, the *Lever-Glide* hi-hat unquestionably had the fastest action I've ever experienced.

Unfortunately, some of this speed was created by what I found to be an overly strong spring tension. The stand's internal spring features a rotating adjustment device with five stair-step locking points. It's simple and convenient to operate, and is an excellent design. My only complaint is that the spring tension was too strong even at the lowest setting. Combined with the pedal spring, this overly strong tension made it difficult for me to hold the cymbals down comfortably with my foot (for closed-hi-hat ride patterns) without consciously *stepping down* on the pedal. As an experiment, I compensated for the spring tension by adding weight to the top hi-hat cymbal (with a few lead washers and an extra clutch). With this added weight, the pedal operated beautifully, and the tension was exactly as I like it. I discussed this problem with Tama's Joe Hibbs, who informed me that the designers in Japan are considering lowering the spring tension for ongoing production models. Other drummers with heavier cymbals or larger, heavier feet might not experience my problem, but they could adjust the tension of future models *up* by four steps should they desire to. As the hi-hat is tensioned now, I could not adjust it *down*.

Finally, the *Lever-Glide* hi-hat features a totally independent rotating tripod base. This allows you to put the legs of the tripod in the most convenient position possible for the placement of remote pedals. This is a great feature that has only been available on a very few hi-hat stands up till now. No modern hi-hat stand should be without it.

The *Lever-Glide* hi-hat represents a significant advance in hi-hat design. As soon as Tama gets the tension range adjusted (which should be done by the time you read this), this will be a world-class piece of hardware. The *HH95 Lever-Glide* hi-hat lists for \$165.00.

Rick Van Horn

Evans Genera Drumheads



Photo by Rick Mattingly

Evans, in cooperation with Noble & Cooley, is offering a new line of drumheads called *Genera*. Thus far, heads are available for snare drums and bass drums only. These heads are truly unique. The basic idea behind the entire line is that you shouldn't have to put rings, tape, or anything else on a drumhead, nor should you have to put mufflers, felt strips, or blankets inside a drum. Put the right head on a quality drum, and then let both of them do their jobs without any outside interference.

Bass Drum Heads

Although these are actually the newest of the *Genera* line, I'm starting with the bass drum heads because they are the most significant. Again, the idea behind this design was simple: Find a combination of heads that can be mounted on a bass drum so that nothing need be put inside the drum or on the head itself. After all, why should you spend several hundred dollars for a quality bass drum and then put a pillow inside it? Similarly, if you are going to put felt strips across the drum, or mount plastic collars that hold foam mufflers, you are interfering with the integrity of the bearing edge, which is one of the things you are paying for with a quality drum.

Evans has addressed that issue with the *Genera* bass drum heads, which consist of a batter head and two different front heads. Starting with the batter head, it is a single-

ply, frosted head that has two internal rings around the perimeter. These rings are similar to the *Zero-Ring* concept, except that they are mounted on the underside of the head instead of being on top. They are attached at the hoop only; there is no glue between the layers. Finally, there are 20 small holes in the head, also around the outside edge. According to Evans, these eliminate certain undesirable overtones, and also help vent the drum, affecting the response.

Front heads are available in two models: "Ambient" and "Miking." The Ambient model is single ply with one internal ring, and also has 20 holes around the edge, but these go through both the head and the ring. The Miking model is single ply with no rings. It has the same 20 holes around the outside plus several grill-like holes cut just off-center in the head. These holes are somewhat disguised by the Evans logo.

I tested these heads on a 20" Gretsch bass drum, from which I removed all internal muffling devices. To put it simply, I was amazed at the results. I've had that drum for about 12 years, and in that time I've tried any number of head combinations with various types of muffling. Getting a good bass drum sound invariably involved a number of trial-and-error mountings: a felt strip here, a blanket there, holes of various sizes, and so on. But after mounting the *Genera* batter with the Ambient

front head, I spent all of five minutes fine tuning them, and I ended up with the best sound I've ever gotten from that drum.

We were sent two 20" Ambient front heads for review: One was clear, the other was black. Overall, both heads were very similar, producing a sound that had a good amount of punch but that also had a round, warm tone. Getting both of those characteristics at the same time has always been a challenge. Both heads also had a good amount of resonance, without sounding ringy or boomy. It's hard to put a sound into words, so the best thing I can say is that these heads produced a thud that had tone. As for the difference between the clear head and the black one, it was comparable to the same difference I've found between Evans clear and black tom heads. The clear head was just a little bit drier and punchier; the black head had just a touch more resonance, and also seemed to favor a slightly lower pitch than the clear head. But let me stress that these differences were very slight.

Likewise, the Miking front head had similar characteristics to the Ambients. It was, however, a little more punchy and a little less resonant. It also seemed to have a slightly narrower tuning range in which it sounded good. But for someone who wants to mike the bass drum, this would be the head to use. The grill-like holes that are cut slightly off center line up with where the beater will strike the back head, giving maximum punch. According to Evans, by not cutting a large, round hole in the head, the vibrations are not broken up the same way, thereby giving more resonance and tone. Whatever the reason, it works. I should also note that, despite the name, I don't feel this head is limited to miking applications. I've heard a lot of non-miking drummers tune their bass drums for this sound.

After checking out the three front heads with the *Genera* batter, I became curious as to how much of the sound I was getting was caused by the back head and how much by the front. So keeping the *Genera* batter in place, I mounted a regular Evans black *Resonant* head on the front of the drum, again without any muffling devices. I was impressed with the result. It produced a rather boomy sound, but not an unpleasant one. In fact, in a very loud situation where no miking is employed, it might be perfect. There was still plenty of punch with a full tone, but without that annoying ring that bass drums can often produce.

I should pass on a tip that I was given by Evans. When mounting a head with an internal ring (or two), or any two-ply head, begin by tightening the head down quite a bit. This helps force a collar into both layers of the plastic, which will conform exactly to your own drum. Let it sit overnight, and then tune the drum down to the pitch

continued on page 122

Yamaha Peter Erskine Signature Snare Drum



Photo by Rick Mattingly

Yamaha's latest entry in the ever-expanding family of snare drums is the result of a comment made to the company by Peter Erskine: "I wish Yamaha would make a 4" wood-shell snare drum." When Peter spoke, Yamaha listened. And, giving credit where credit was due, they put his name on the drum.

The *Peter Erskine Signature Snare* drum bears a certain resemblance to Yamaha's brass-shell piccolo snare, in that the sizes are similar and both drums have the same lugs and dual snare adjustment. But there are some important differences. First is the extra half inch of depth on the *Erskine* model. If comparing, say, a 6 1/2" drum with a 7" model, that half inch might not be particularly significant. But the difference between 3 1/2"(on the brass piccolo) and 4" has a noticeable effect. Not only does it give a little extra body to the sound, but it also affects the feel. The heads are so close together on the piccolo drum that the re-

bound can feel a little choked. That extra depth on the *Erskine* drum helps avoid that problem.

The other major difference between the two drums is, of course, the difference between wood and metal. The *Erskine* drum is made from 7-ply birch, which gives a somewhat warmer sound than brass. Because of its size, the drum can still be tuned pretty tight and produce a clear, high-pitched piccolo crack, which is especially nice with rimshots. But the drum also sounds very good tuned to a medium pitch. It would work fine as a general-purpose snare drum in a low-volume or miked situation, whereas the 372" brass piccolo can sometimes sound thin when used in that manner.

The drum came fitted with an Evans *Uno* 58 WOO batter head, with an Evans snare head on the bottom. There was also a clear Yamaha O-ring supplied with the drum. There are no internal muffling de-

THE BOLD NEW SOUND.

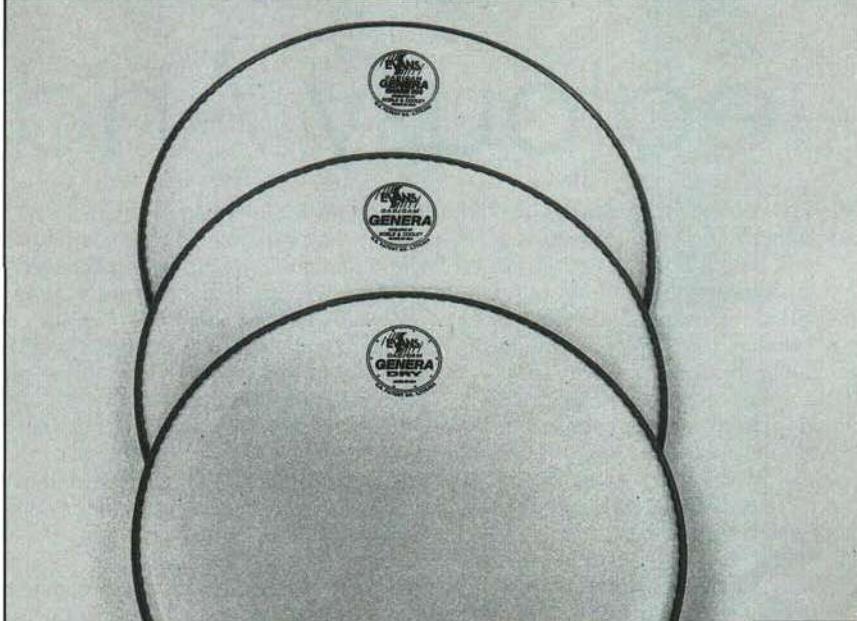
vices inside the drum. Without the O-ring, the drum had plenty of ring; with it, the drum was very dry—in fact, it was actually too dry. On Erskine's own recommendation, I tried an Evans Genera head on top, and that produced a sound that was somewhere in between the two sounds described above. It had a little bit of ring, but not too much. For a low-volume, acoustic situation, this would probably be the head to use.

The drum was extremely responsive with either head, and it sounded good over a pretty wide range of pitches. The snare adjustment is very sophisticated, and offers maximum adjustment with relatively little effort. I was able to get good snare response anywhere on the head. Other features of the Erskine snare are die-cast hoops, and rubber spacers between the lugs and the shell. According to Yamaha, these help prevent deadening of the shell by the lugs. And speaking of the lugs, they fit this drum much better than they do the piccolo model. Same with the snare-adjustment units—they don't stick up over the top of the drum the way they do with the brass piccolo.

Overall, this drum has a sound, feel, and look of quality. It has a good crack with plenty of body, good response from soft to loud, and the construction is flawless, from the well-formed bearing edge to the smooth, subtle snare bed. The drum seems to be fairly versatile, working well in piccolo and more general-purpose situations. Erskine and Yamaha should both be proud to have their names on it.

The Peter Erskine Signature Snare Drum has a list price of \$795.00, and a soft snare drum bag is included. The price is comparable to other custom snare drums, such as Montineri and Solid 4x14 models. One final note: This is a limited edition drum; only 400 will be made.

—Rick Mattingly



GENERA EVANS DRUMHEADS



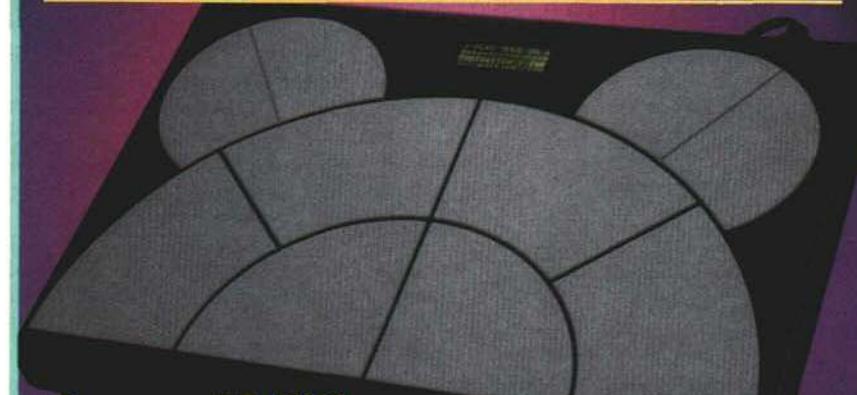
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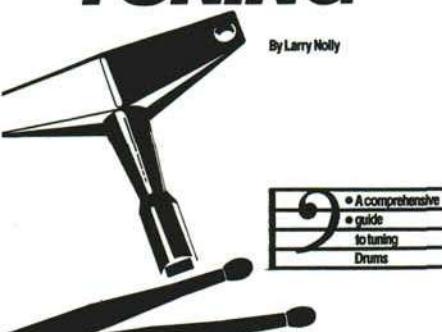
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by Roy Burns

Jealousy And Gossip

The dictionary defines "jealousy" as "an envious attitude, especially towards a rival." People who are jealous of you or of your accomplishments tend to put you down or discount what you do. Sometimes these put-downs have little or nothing to do with the truth.

For example, I recently had lunch with a very good friend. We were comparing stories about funny situations and interesting personalities in the world of drumming. At one point I said, "I've heard a very interesting story about you. Did you really tell a certain bandleader that he had no sense of time?" My friend laughed out loud and said, "No, I honestly never did that, but I wish I had!"

We had a good laugh, and then I asked, "Is it true that this particular bandleader fired you after an argument over a tempo?" My friend replied, "No, as a matter of fact, I left the band on good terms. My wife was pregnant, and I left to be at home with her when the baby arrived."

Then my friend asked me a question. "Is it true that you interviewed a drummer, wrote an article for *MD*, and neglected to mention the name of another drummer who supplied you with some information?" He added, "At any rate, this drummer is telling people that you left his name out on purpose, and he's very upset!"

I couldn't believe what I was hearing. As a matter of fact, I mentioned the name of this drummer twice in the article and gave him full credit. I told my friend, "This is simply not true. Why would this person say such a thing?"

My friend made an insightful comment. "When you're unhappy with your own career, you tend to be jealous of others who are accomplishing more than you are. The easy way to make yourself feel superior is to put someone else down. It's unfortunate, but it happens a lot in our business."

I think my friend is right. It takes no work, no practicing, no sacrifice, and no self-examination to criticize others. It's a quick fix for your ego, but it doesn't help you grow as a drummer or as a person.

Fortunately, the best players have a different sort of attitude. I was in Canada recently, and I heard several excellent Canadian drummers—performing clinics, playing solos, playing duets, and playing with bands. Jack DeJohnette was on the program as well. Jack and I were sitting together listening and observing the various artists until it was time for Jack to perform.

Jack's attitude was one of looking and listening to the good things that each player had to offer, both verbally and musically. At one point, he turned to me and said, "I wish more young drummers could be here to listen to what some of these people have to say. It would help them." Throughout the two days that Jack and I were at the Canadian Music Fair, I never heard him make a critical remark about another drummer. He was so open-minded that it was a pleasure to hang out with him—as it always is.

What do you do when you hear a story about yourself that you know is not true? The best thing is to just get on with your work. There's really no point in arguing with the person who started the untrue story. In most cases they'll tell another lie and deny the entire episode.

There is an ancient saying in the East: "A man who talks to a fool, is also a fool!" Arguing with fools is a lost cause. It will do no good. However, remember that you must be doing something right if someone else goes out of their way to put you down.

One of my drum teachers, Henry Adler, used to say, "Remember! In order for someone to put you down, they have to spell your name right." It seems that unfair criticism from less successful people is one of the negatives that accompanies success. Criticizing famous drummers is a cheap way to get attention, a cheap way to feel important. However, it tends to keep the critical person small—small in accomplishment and small in mind.

Ed Shaughnessy and I have been friends for many years. We talk frequently and exchange ideas and stories. Ed has a great way of looking at our business. His attitude towards other drummers is, "We are not competing. We just happen to be in the same business." This, by the way, is the attitude of most good players. They are usually willing to share ideas, experiences, and stories with other drummers—especially younger ones.

Don't worry about extremely negative people. Gravitate to the positive ones. Study with a teacher who has positive attitudes and avoid teachers who are defensive. Hang out with other drummers who are enthusiastic about drumming and improving. Put your energy into learning, growing, and becoming a better player.

When you develop this type of positive attitude, negative people can't touch you. The reason is that you are so busy enjoying practicing, improving, and experiencing the joy of being involved in music that you don't have time to think about what the gossips may or may not be saying.

Jealousy and gossip are the pastime of the faint of heart. They are the hobby of drummers who lack the courage to go for it. Those drummers stand on the sidelines of life, criticizing, complaining, and contributing little but hot air. They always have elaborate reasons to defend their own lack of recognition and accomplishment.

Life is very democratic. The best players get the best gigs. The drummers who can handle pressure make the most money. The most intelligent drummers are sought out by the best musicians. The best players become well-known. The best players do the most work. The drummers who are professional in their attitude toward their work have the longest careers. The best players are allowed to play their own style and are respected for it.

And last but not least, the best players are busy playing. They have no time for jealousy, envy, or gossip. The best players let their drumming do the talking.

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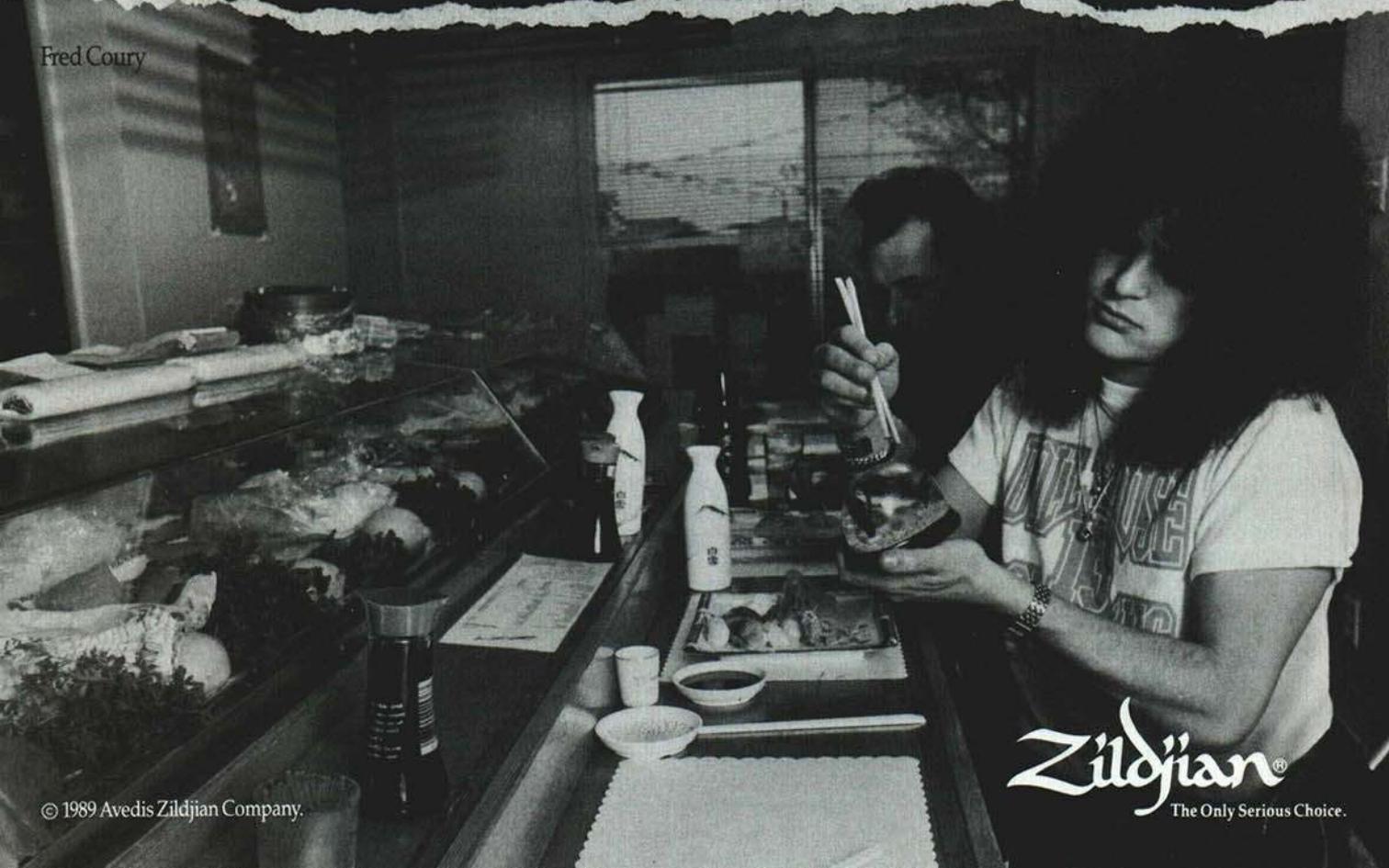
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by Rick Van Horn

ddrum 2



Photo by Rick Mattingly

I always feel a little squeamish about undertaking a review of any electronic product. I've never been heavily involved in electronics, and I'm not interested in spending hours working with programming, editing, computerized sound restructuring, and all the other incredible things that electronic devices allow musicians to do today. I am interested in performing live, with the best possible combination of emotional input and musical output.

Yet it is that very attitude that led me to undertake the review of the *ddrum 2* Programmable Digital Percussion kit (hardware model 3, equipped with version 2.2 software). This is a device designed first and foremost for *players*. It's a playback unit using internal and cartridge-based source sounds; it has no sampling or computerized sound-sculpting capabilities. And yet it offers state-of-the-art sophistication in all of its functions, and is as appropriate in a MIDI studio as it is on a club stage.

The Pads

The *ddrum 2* kit features one 12" snare pad, three 10" tom pads, and a bass drum unit. The pads are circular plastic "dishes" fitted with standard Remo drumheads that can be tensioned in the normal way for playing comfort. The tom pads are designed to be mounted on any Tama-style L-post; the snare pad has no mount and is designed to be used on a traditional snare stand. Much has already been written about how comfortable *ddrum* pads are to play on as compared with the pads of other electronic kits. I can only add that besides being comfortable, they served to trigger the electronic sounds well at all dynamic levels. When sitting behind the kit, I found

that the *ddrum* pads provided me with a very reassuring psychological "bridge" between real drums and total electronics.

The bass drum unit is an angular steel post fitted with a wide, spurred base at its bottom (for the attachment of a bass drum pedal) and a cushioned impact/sensor pad at its top. Although compact and streamlined, the design works wonderfully, stays put, and looks pretty hip. The cushioned impact pad gives a very realistic and comfortable response to a bass drum beater, and is replaceable if it wears out.

The bass drum unit and tom pads are each fitted with one XLR jack for connection to the *ddrum 2*'s brain; the snare pad is fitted with two such jacks: one for the snare sound and one for a totally independent rim sound. Cables are provided with XLR connectors on one end (the pad end) and 1/4" phone plugs on the other (for the brain).

The Brain

The front panel of the *ddrum 2* brain has five Expansion Slots designed to receive *SoundPac* cartridges (and also *KitPac* memory/storage cartridges). To their right is the Programming Section, which contains all the controls needed to change or copy a sound, set the different MIDI functions, and store everything in Kit Memory. It also contains the Input/Control knob and an LED display that shows all the different settings. At the upper right of the panel is a line of eight Sensitivity knobs, corresponding to the eight input channels. These adjust the input sensitivity of each pad to suit the player's style. Trigger and Peak LEDs are used for adjusting dynamics.

At the bottom right of the panel are the Bank and Kit Select (Channel Select) but-

tons used to select pre-programmed kits for playing, or to select where to store a new kit. (An LED display always indicates what kit has been selected.) The buttons are also used for channel selection in the Edit mode.

At the far right of the panel are two output controls. Master Level controls the overall soundmix level to the Mix Out jack on the rear of the panel. Headphones Out controls the output level of the stereo headphone jack, located immediately below on the front panel. The entire unit can be fitted with "ears" for mounting in a standard 19" rack.

The rear panel of the *ddrum 2* contains the eight pad input jacks, as well as eight individual Audio Out jacks, left and right Mix Out jacks, a Line In jack and Line Level control (for bringing in signals from click tracks, drum machines, etc.), and MIDI In and Out jacks. The power switch and fuse are also on the rear panel.

While the *ddrum* pads are absolutely wonderful to work with, it is the brain of the *ddrum 2* that makes it so user-friendly. It offers 64 drumkits at the touch of one or two buttons, provides multiple-voicing so that no sound ever cuts itself off, and produces the finest drum sounds I've ever heard come out of a box.

Let's address that last comment first. The simple fact is that most of the sounds in the *ddrum 2*'s internal memory (there are 50) and in the interchangeable *SoundPacs* (each of which can contain from two to 20 sounds, depending on their nature and length) are digitally recorded *acoustic* samples. Then, to quote from the *ddrum* manual: "All *ddrum 2* sounds are edited, processed, and then stored with a number of custom techniques hidden to the user. These techniques make use of the fact that *ddrum 2* has two completely separate sound generators for each channel, and that they can be combined in a number of ways. A special method called Drumhead Vibration Algorhythm removes 'machine gun' effects that normally occur when you play flams and tight rolls with a sampled sound, and also ensures perfect reproduction of tom-tom sounds, among others. There are also special modes for making sounds from analog drum machines and kits sound just as the original." To further explain the Drumhead Vibration Algorhythm, it means that the *ddrum 2* has been programmed to copy the way a drumhead acts when hit by several strokes within a certain time. This function, probably more than any other, contributes to the very natural dynamic response and immediate sound reproduction that is so uniquely characteristic of the *ddrum 2*.

Gregg Bissonette

3



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Programming Sounds

Remember, I'm approaching this whole thing from the standpoint of a player, not a programmer. That means I was interested in seeing how soon I could get the *ddrum 2* kit up and performing, with a minimum of fine-tuning and refining the sounds. Well, I found that it was entirely possible (and quite musically satisfactory) to turn the thing on, choose from several of the factory-programmed kits, and begin playing *immediately!* I could have stopped learning about the unit at that point and probably been very comfortable with its performance.

The next logical step was to find out how easy it was to make minor changes in the sounds to suit my own particular needs. This led me to the Programming Section. I've been daunted by the operations necessary to program and edit sounds on other electronic units. Not so with the *ddrum 2*; nothing could be easier. The sequence is the same for any sound in any of the eight channels, and goes something like this:

1. Select the channel you wish to put a sound on by touching a Channel Select button.

2. Put the *ddrum 2* into Edit mode by touching the Edit button.

3. Touch the Sound button, then dial up the sound you wish to start with using the control dial. Each sound has a numerical code, and you have your choice of any of the internal sounds or any sound from a *SoundPac* cartridge that has been inserted into one of the Expansion Slots. The *ddrum 2* treats all of these sounds as one big memory bank.

4. Once the Sound has been selected, you edit it by touching buttons that control its pitch, pitch bend amount and rate, bass, treble, decay length, overall level, and pan position (if you're using the stereo Mix Out). You can also link up to three sounds in an adjustable Master/Slave relationship, which comes in handy for adding realism to certain sounds. For example, you can link your tom sounds to a bit of white noise set up on Channel 8, and create a realistic "snare buzz" ambience to the kit. Bass drums can be fattened or have attack added by linking one or more bass drum sounds to a rim click or other sharp sound. The possibilities of this are limited only by the fact that each of the sounds being linked must be assigned to one of the eight channels; there is no way of "layering" more than one sound on any one channel.

5. Once you have your sound tailored the way you want it, you simply touch the Store button to put it into Kit Memory, touch the Edit button again to get out of the Edit mode, and you're ready to play. If you're setting up an entirely new kit, then you just repeat the editing steps for each of the eight channels.

You don't have to start from scratch every time, either. A Copy function allows

you to copy any sound from one channel to any other. This is very handy when you want to set up a group of related toms and just adjust their pitch, or when you want to take a bass drum sound and duplicate it, then add ambience to it with a bit more decay for a channel-link setup.

Entire kits can also be copied for editing purposes, and moved from any given Bank/Kit position to any other just as easily. This is great if you find you've built a kit you like a lot, but it belongs in a group of kits set up in a different bank. For example, I started with a factory-programmed kit, and tweaked it until it was something quite unique. But it was on a Bank/Kit position among those that were dedicated to permanently retrievable factory kits. Since I did, in fact, want to retrieve those kits, I had to move my "personalized" version to a different Bank/Kit position. I pushed a couple of buttons and the deed was done!

The headphone jack makes it very convenient to work with the *ddrum 2* unit off stage. As a matter of fact, I programmed all of my kits (I only set up a modest 12 for my test gigs) on my desk at the office. However, I did learn an important lesson: Don't expect the sounds you hear in headphones to accurately reflect those you'll hear from your sound system. (As a matter of fact, don't expect the sounds of low-priced headphones to be the same as those of high-quality models, either!) I had to do some fine tuning on the gig once the sounds were coming out of high-powered speakers. But even so, the use of the headphones got me into the ballpark on all my sounds and saved me a lot of on-stage time and hassle. Besides, the ease with which sounds can be edited on the *ddrum 2* makes it possible to change them even while you are playing! I found that I was making minor adjustments throughout the night. This is no reflection on the quality of the *ddrum 2*'s performance or of the sounds themselves; it more reflects my inexperience with building good-quality sounds. But at every turn, the *ddrum 2* offered me a safe, simple, and easily understandable way to make the changes I wanted. The manual also offered loads of down-to-earth advice about how to build good drum sounds. They ought to call this thing Roadie-In-A-Box!

Playing The *ddrum 2*

Actually *using* the kits stored in the *ddrum 2* is very simple. When you're not in the Edit mode, you're automatically in the Play mode. A total of 64 kits are always available: eight kits each in eight different banks. To call up a given kit, you simply touch the Bank button, which enables you to select one of the eight banks accessed at this point by the eight Channel Select buttons. The bank you've selected shows as the left figure in the two-digit LED readout. Then you touch one of the eight Channel

Select buttons again to select which of the eight kits in that bank you wish to use. Bingo...you have your kit. Once in a given bank, it is possible to switch to any of that bank's eight kits simply by touching a different Channel Select button. To get into a different bank completely, the Bank button must first be pushed; then you can switch around through any of *that* bank's kits on a one-touch basis. The key to convenience in performance is to keep all of the kits that you might be using in a similar application in one bank, so that you can vary them with the minimal amount of effort. But even if you have your kits scattered all over the place, how hard is it to touch two buttons? And the exceptional beauty of this system is that while you are playing in a given kit and a given bank, it is possible to pre-set for a change to a kit in a different bank by touching the Bank button and selecting the bank with a Channel Select button. The kit will not actually change until you touch the Channel Select button again to select the new kit, so you can actually time this down to a specific beat mid-song, if you like. This is great for making dramatic changes in bridges of songs, or "beefing up" the sound of a particular kit after a modulation or solo passage. (There is an accessory item called a Kit Selector that allows you to do all of your kit changing with the touch of a drumstick. It lets you put the actual *ddrum 2* brain in a rack or in some other position out of reach of the drums, if necessary.)

Having been a club/Top-40 drummer most of my career, I couldn't help but appreciate being able to make radical changes to the sound of my kit instantly, to correspond with the needs of the tune. Although I've never been a proponent of electronic drums in general, I've also never made any bones about the fact that this is the greatest advantage that electronically generated drum sounds have over acoustic drums—no matter how well the latter may be tuned, miked, and played. One acoustic drumkit can only sound like itself. One electronic drumkit can sound like...well, 64, in the case of the *ddrum 2*. There is just no denying the versatility of such a device. And when you consider that the *ddrum 2* brain can be triggered by most triggering devices in conjunction with acoustic drums, the advantages compound. I should also mention that I used both the *ddrum* bass drum unit and a pair of DW EP-1 trigger pedals. I found that the signal from the *ddrum* device was a bit hotter, but bringing up the fader on my mixer a point gave the same level with the DWs. (I must say I was *thrilled* by the capability of projecting enormous kick drum sounds without having to break my leg to produce them.)

Output Mixing

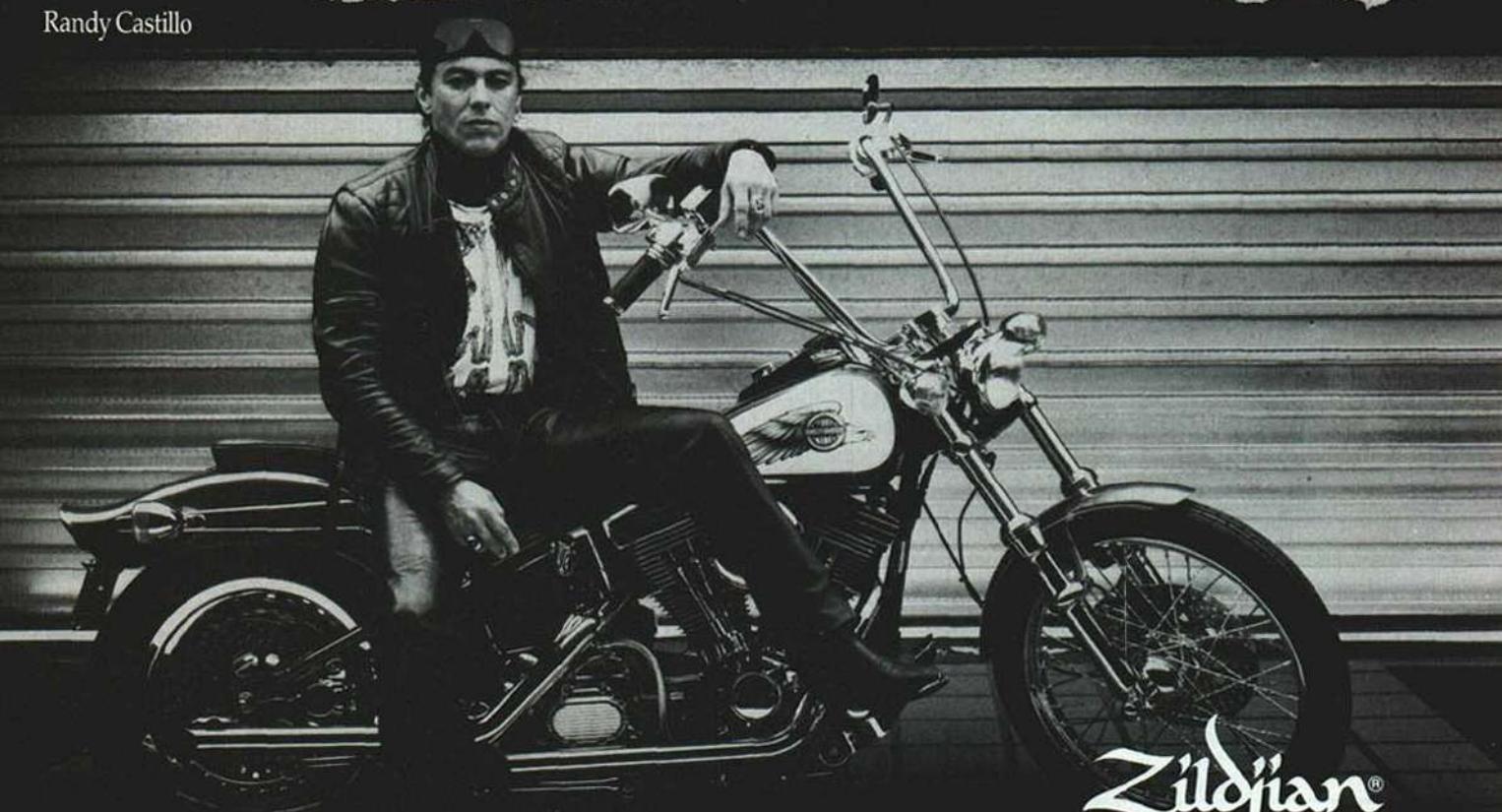
This brings us to the subject of controlling the sounds created by the *ddrum 2*.

Tommy Aldridge



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The *ddrum 2* designers have taken into account that not everybody is going to have a mega-channel soundboard, or sub-mixing capability, or even a sound technician. So the *ddrum 2* has various methods for outputting its sounds. The first, and most effective, is the individual Audio Out channels that correspond to each pad input channel. When these are used, each channel sends a separate signal to the board, and the stereo pan function is not in effect. Then there are the Mix Out jacks, which provide a left and right stereo mix of the eight channels according to how you have them panned and at what level they are programmed. There is only one Master Out volume control on the *ddrum 2*, which, in essence, controls signal strength. Actual left and right volume control must be handled at the mixing board.

On the model 3 brain that I used, a third mixing option is provided. Using the Pan control, it is possible to "defeat" the bass drum channel's input into the total mix, and put its signal out only through its individual channel. Thus, you have a stereo mix of the rest of the kit, but individual control over the bass drum. I found this system to be extremely useful when I attempted to run the *ddrum 2* entirely via its own mixing capabilities. I discovered that no matter how carefully I balanced the levels of snare, kick, and toms beforehand, I always wanted the kick drum hotter than it was when it came to actual performance. The only way to do this through editing was to go back and lower the levels of the snare and toms, and then bring the overall level of the mix up. By keeping the bass drum independent, I was able to get a good balance on the rest of the kit and boost the bass drum sound when necessary. This is a nice compromise between mixing-channel economy and sound-control sophistication.

Obviously, though, independent control of each channel is the optimum way to go, since then you can make adjustments in instrument levels from kit to kit at the board instead of via editing at the *ddrum 2* brain. (This can sometimes be necessary, as even the most careful editing of sound levels can still produce kits with hotter snares than others, bigger bass drum sounds, etc.) But again, this calls for eight channels on the main board (if you're going direct) or at least an eight-channel sub-mixer at the drums.

Ah, yes, the mixer. This is what might be considered the down side of electronic drums, and while it certainly is not unique

to the *ddrum 2*, it cannot be ignored. No matter how responsive the pads or how incredible the drum samples in the brain, no electronic drumkit is going to make a sound without an amplification system. The *ddrum 2* manual states in no uncertain terms that "The total sound will never be better than the sound system used." It goes on to say that "The attack parts of drum and percussion sounds are very rich in transients, and therefore require adequate sound-power and a fast power amplifier to sound good (not to sound loud). Do not underestimate the effect and speed requirements of the amplifier. Guitar and bass amplifiers are, in most cases, a bad choice. They are made to color the sound of the instrument in a way not suitable for drums." What this means is that if you are going to work with an instrument of this quality, you're going to have to have a system of at least equal quality to do it justice.

For the record, I tested the *ddrum 2* through a system consisting of a Seck 722 12-channel stereo mixer, a JBL/UREI 2060 power amp, and two JBL 46026 Cabaret Series monitor cabinets. I ran the drums into the mixer and panned their outputs to center, sending the left stereo output from the mixer to my power amp and monitor speakers, and the right output to my band's P.A. board. The band uses a 1600-watt biamped P.A. into three-way cabinets. So we had enough power and fidelity to do the *ddrum 2* justice.

There's no denying that, while the *ddrum 2* kit is lightweight and easy to transport, that advantage was offset somewhat by the additional sound equipment I had to carry to make it work for me. (Drummers who are used to miking their drums and have substantial monitoring systems already—and perhaps sound techs and/or roadies as well—would likely not find this a problem. Since I do not mike my kit except under special circumstances, it was a hassle for me.) This is simply a reality of the high-tech musical world, but it's something to keep in mind; the electronic drum equipment is only part of the total package necessary to be able to perform.

MIDI

I said earlier that the *ddrum 2* would be appropriate in a MIDI studio. The reason I haven't gone into great detail about its MIDI functions is that I had no application for them. However, I know enough about MIDI to understand from the *ddrum 2*'s manual that it is fully implemented for the MIDI enthusiast. It can serve as a sound source for other MIDI controllers, or it can itself control up to eight separate MIDI instruments. The performance data for *ddrum 2* drumkits can be stored or transferred onto computer disks, and a wide variety of functions can be dictated via MIDI programming.

One aspect of the *ddrum 2*'s MIDI im-

plementation that should be mentioned is its Dynamic Expansion parameter. MIDI velocity is divided into 128 steps, which corresponds approximately to 40dB. The velocity range of the *ddrum 2* is around 60dB, meaning that when using the *ddrum 2* as a playing or playback MIDI device (such as when recording your playing into a MIDI sequencer) you have a greater dynamic range than you would with other instruments whose dynamic ranges correspond only to the MIDI velocity range. Yet, by turning the Dynamic Expansion off, incoming data originating from MIDI devices such as keyboards, drum machines, etc., will be dealt with on a one-to-one basis, matching the range of that instrument for accurate performance reproduction. Other MIDI functions and parameters are incorporated to make the *ddrum 2* as user-friendly and equipment-compatible in this arena as I have said it is on stage. Those individuals who love to burn the midnight oil in their home studios—surrounded by myriad sound generators, processors, and other creative gizmos all interconnected by a macrame of MIDI cables—should find the *ddrum 2* brain a welcome and useful addition to the family.

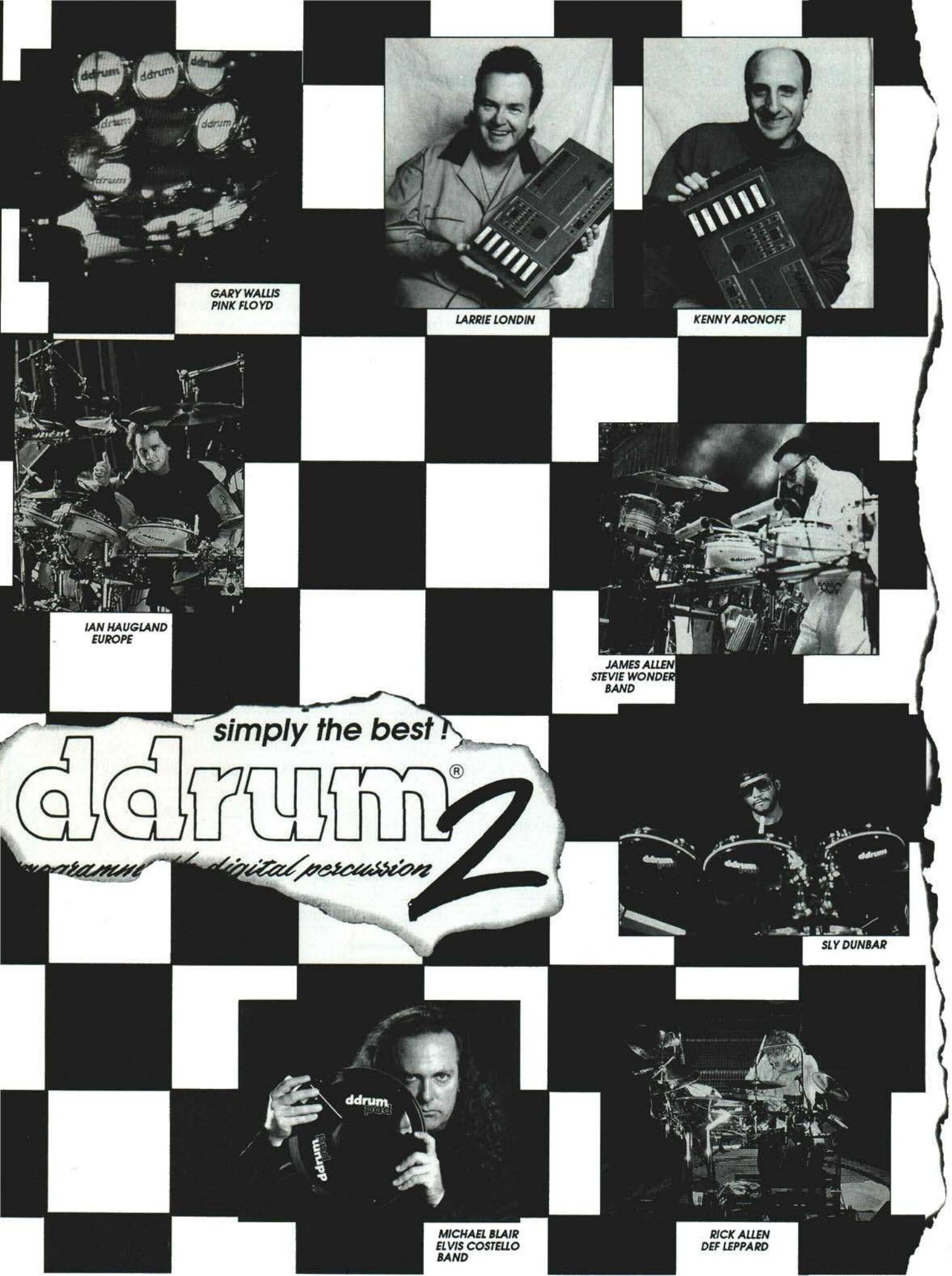
If it seems like I've had nothing but good things to say about the *ddrum 2*, it's true. I've never come so close to considering switching over from acoustic to electronic drums. And the idea of triggering *ddrum 2* sounds from my acoustic drums has become an almost inescapable fantasy lately. The only thing stopping me—as I'm afraid it may stop many other players in similar positions—is the price. It's not hard to surmise that anything that does as much as the *ddrum 2* does—as well as it does and as easily as it does—is going to be expensive. The fact that it is made in Sweden and thus is an imported item adds to the cost. The figures are: The *ddrum 2* brain alone lists for \$4,995.00. A complete kit with pads and cables as I've described goes for \$6,780.00. A nifty little triggering option called *The Tube*—which is a metal pipe that provides a very familiar and comfortable feeling when playing cowbell or other metallic sounds and fits into tight spaces nicely—costs \$185.00.

If you amortize \$6,780.00 over 64 different kits, it works out to about \$105.00 per kit, which might be a less painful way of looking at the cost of the *ddrum 2*. But with the demands of drummers to be included in the advancements of technology, and the seemingly unavoidable requirements for sound systems and ever-more-sophisticated means of performance in mind, the *ddrum 2* offers the best sounds, the easiest use, and the most fun of anything in its field. If you're into this kind of equipment and can afford one, buy it. If you can't afford it now, start saving up.

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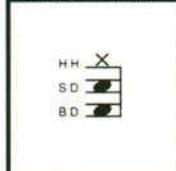
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Subdividing And Regrouping Time



MUSIC KEY



In this, my first article for *Modern Drummer*, I would like to talk about and demonstrate a few different ideas concerning the subdivision and regrouping of time based on a common rate. These equivalent rhythms are merely partial subdivisions of a larger rhythmic group.

In any time-keeping situation, there is a certain number of notes being played in a measure. In the following few examples, we'll look at how to subdivide and regroup these particular notes. (The numerals written above the note groupings refer to the number of notes within the group, and should not be mistaken as a rhythmic notation.)

Let's start by taking a look at the main time feel that we will be working off of. For this example, I've chosen a two-measure phrase of 6/8 time with a 16th-note feel. The total number of 16th notes being played in this phrase is 24, as shown below. In the following example we have the main 6/8 time feel set up as four sets of six-note groupings.

Now let's take these 24 16th notes, and without changing the rate, regroup them into three sets of eight-note groupings.

Playing the previous example correctly without altering the rate of the 16th-note hi-hat line will give you a completely new feel without actually changing the original time.

Here are a few other ideas:

Subdividing and regrouping into six sets of four-note groupings.

- Subdividing and regrouping into four sets of five-note groupings and one four-note grouping.

Subdividing and regrouping using various sets of note groupings.

Finally, here is an example of how I might use some of these ideas in my playing.

Four lines of drum notation, each consisting of a top staff with sixteenth-note patterns and a bottom staff with eighth-note patterns. The notation is divided into measures by vertical bar lines. The first line starts with a 6/8 time signature. The second line starts with a 4/4 time signature. The third line starts with a 4/4 time signature. The fourth line starts with a 4/4 time signature.

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close up, and even from behind. And that's the thing about drummers like Buddy Rich, and Louie Bellson, and Jake Hanna, and Shelly Manne: They are so lovely to look at when they play. Tony Williams is the same. They look so good, don't they? They're the Sugar Ray Leonards; they just look world class, whatever that means. All of the drummers from that era—from Jo Jones right through to Elvin Jones—played with such lovely lifts, and their feet would be going—it's like bicycling. It all comes from the arse, you know. It's lovely to see.

"And you have to see them live. Listening to it and seeing it done are two different things. If I had gone through life without seeing Joe Morello, I'd never have known quite how brilliant he was—and hopefully still is. There was that generation before me that missed out on a lot, because they stopped musicians from coming to England in the late '30s. We missed Charlie Parker; it's a crying shame to think that he actually flew over London to get to Stockholm and into Paris, all because of some bloody union. I had to go to Paris when I was 18 to see Kenny Clarke play with Bud Powell, because they couldn't come to London to play. It was a great shame for us. Finally, thanks to Ronnie Scott, we had Americans playing in clubs, which is the best way to see them. I never got to see Joe Morello in a club; I saw him many times in concert, but in a club it must have been amazing to see a band like the Brubeck Quartet,

First we zigged. Then everybody zigged.

"So all of our stuff from the generation before came from hearing the latest Blakey album or whatever. Art Taylor seemed to be on everything that was any good during the late '50s, and all you heard of him was that lovely time on the cymbal. Kenny Clarke was another one who could ride a cymbal in such a beautiful way. Billy Higgins is the only other drummer I know who can just ride a cymbal, and nothing else need go on. They have such a touch. But then when I finally saw Art Taylor play live, his feet were going, too. You never heard everything he had until you saw him play live. I mean, on record, he couldn't ever sound bad, but when you saw him live there were those little sparks that you never heard on records.

"Max Roach is another one that plays differently than I thought. I never saw him play until about ten years ago. I'd seen all the others, but I'd never caught him. On those records with Clifford Brown, you hear those licks at that speed, and to play that fast, you need the least amount of movement. I would have never thought that he played like Elvin, with that cymbal going like that. But when I saw him, his hands had this terrific lift-off, especially his left hand. You wonder how he could get all those things in there, but it was marvelous.

"And the same thing with Jo Jones," Charlie continues. "On those things he did on records with Buck Clayton and Basie, that rhythm section was as light as a feather. *Unbelievably* light. And yet every time I

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"Start Me Up" (*Tattoo You*)

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"Undercover Of The Night" (*Undercover*)

This is a very dramatic drum track, which makes use of overdubbed toms. This is the basic beat that goes through the whole song:

On the verses, overdubbed toms accent one or both of the backbeats.

On the choruses, this pattern helps propel the beat.

"One Hit (To The Body)" (*Dirty Work*)

Charlie's drum intro provides a framework for some syncopated guitar riffs.

saw Jo Jones play live, he'd have his foot going four to the bar, and he'd never budge. Even with a trio, Jo Jones was like that. You can understand it with a big band, because the guy on the end has to hear the beat, you know. But with a trio he'd play the same way. I couldn't believe it. The first time I saw him in concert, I thought he sounded kind of old-fashioned. He'd whack his stick like a rimshot at the end of a roll,

and all that stuff. And yet on records it's so smooth, and a beautiful thing to hear.

"Jo Jones was an amazing man. He'd sit there with that big smile; I think that came from playing shows at the Apollo during the big band era. I saw Jo Jones playing in this little club once, and there were only about three people in the room. He looked as miserable as sin, but then this girl walked in and he started smiling, and the drums

"Mixed Emotions" (*Steel Wheels*)

Charlie's trademark hi-hat pattern is still evident, but the bass drum pattern is more reminiscent of his earlier playing than the straight fours that marked the late '70s and early '80s recordings.

"Rock And A Hard Place" (*Steel Wheels*)

Charlie uses an alternating right hand/left hand pattern between the hi-hat and snare to drive this tune. There is also a tambourine playing 8ths on the track.

"Fancy Man Blues" (B-side of "Mixed Emotions" single)

Charlie applies his trademark hi-hat pattern to a down-home shuffle.

Showing a bar or two of Charlie's beats, as we have done here, only scratches the surface of his playing, and doesn't reveal the character that is evident in his drumming. To really appreciate him, you have to check out the recordings, where you can hear the many variations that Charlie will play throughout a track, the way he places his snare drum backbeat, the colors he gets from a swishy hi-hat, or his China cymbal, or his ride. Most of all, you get that human element that has been so crucial to the Rolling Stones—and to good music in general.

just lit up. It was very funny."

Hearing Charlie tell that story reminds me of something I witnessed at New York's West End Cafe, near the end of Jo Jones's life. As I entered the club, I saw Papa Jo sitting at a table next to the bandstand, looking very old and feeble. When it was time for the band to go on, he had to be helped to the drums. But as soon as the band was announced and the stage lights

went on, his face lit up with that famous smile, and for the next hour he looked and played like a man half his age. When the set ended and the lights went out, he suddenly became an old man again.

"I saw something just like that once," Charlie replies. "We were rehearsing in Holland, and Kenny Clarke was playing a concert with Kenny Drew in the same building. This was late in Kenny Clarke's life, and he could hardly walk at that time. But the minute he sat down at the drums, he was like a 24-year-old man. It was *amazing*. They would introduce a number and he was off. I'd seen him a few times when I was younger, but it was amazing to see him play so well."

"I'd loved to have seen Sid Catlett play. I've asked a few people about Sid Catlett and Dave Tough. Ahmet Ertegun [president of Atlantic Records] saw them play a lot, and he told me that, contrary to what you would think, Davey Tough—who was a very small man—was an incredibly loud player, and Big Sid was a very quiet player. I'd loved to have actually seen them play to judge that. And Chick Webb—I know very little about him, but he was a hunchback, wasn't he? When you think of the physical strength it must have taken to swing a band at the Savoy for dances, it must have been something else."

The fact that Charlie was unable to see a lot of his heroes play live only added to their mystique. "I fell in love with black music when I was 12," he recalls. "Rather

like when I heard Charlie Parker at the age of 13. I heard one record and fell in love with it. I wanted to be him. And then there was Earl Bostic and Gerry Mulligan. I was totally in awe of anyone American—particularly a black American. I could tell you what clothes they wore. My drumkit is a Tony Williams Gretsch advert. It still is, the same period as that. I don't look at drum adverts now, like Pearl and all that. But when I was young.... I've still got the *down beat* with Max Roach on the cover. It was a drum issue. It's got a Leedy ad with Shelly Manne. I used to wear Ivy League clothes like Shelly wore.

"And when American drummers came over and I could see them play, it was like a field day. To see Louis Hayes or Mickey

Roker play was fantastic. I was totally envious of it, but not like jealousy or anything. I just think that it's lovely to have the facility to play as well as someone like Mickey Roker, who hardly anybody knows. Another guy I saw was Victor Lewis with Stan Getz. Beautiful player. To be able to play bossa novas like that is unbelievable, for me. That guy's a percussion section in himself; he's got four things going. I could sit and watch that all night. You can talk forever about how you get that good, but it's just in him. It's how he walks, and you can't really explain it. It's lovely.

"I saw Tony Williams when he was like 18 or 19, and he was incredible. He's still incredible, but he's where everyone starts from now. Whereas Tony Williams was

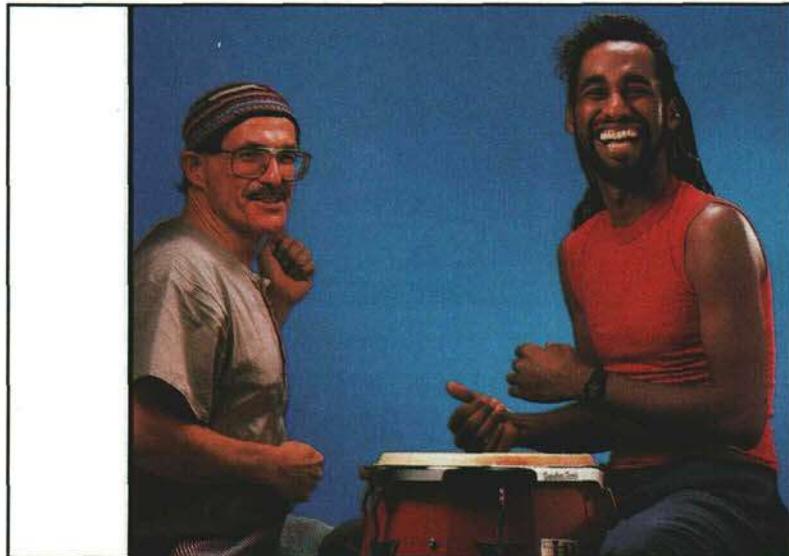
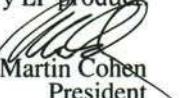


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probably the last person I saw who literally took drums to another step. Elvin Jones did that, but for me, he did it in a very logical way. You could see that it came from Africa, you know? The way he played with Coltrane, you knew that those rhythms were based in Africa and put in New York. But when I saw Tony play, I didn't know where he got that. I still don't. Now you've got guys who can copy it, but when he was a young man, I'd never heard anyone dropping beats out, or coming up with those ridiculous, swirling rhythms, and the hi-hat would be in another time. Sometimes you'd wonder how he was going to get to the end of the bar. I'd have stopped halfway through and been completely lost," Charlie laughs, "but he would pull it off. He was about 16,

I think, when Miles asked him to play. Imagine someone at that age who could scare the life out of you.

"These young drummers now start with Tony, and it took all my listening, almost, to follow where Tony was. And now they start with that. They're incredibly sensitive to be able to play like that. But that's the start they've got. I hear young drummers in London who play like Paul Motian with the Bill Evans Trio. It takes an incredible ability to play like that, and it's marvelously done, but it's all one tempo. That's what comes of not seeing those people play, because they would have stopped and played a half-time. The Bill Evans Trio was an amazing thing to witness. I saw them at Shelly Manne's place. They would have

three independent times going at once, and it would still be one, held together by just the root note the bass was playing or by the time that Motian was playing on his hi-hat. And the rest of it was like floating. An *incredible* thing to witness, I thought. It would actually get lost in itself. It was fantastic.

"You need an awful lot of taste to do that kind of thing. I think Motian and Joe Morello are the most tasteful players I ever witnessed. Morello was incredible. I used to try and do that one-stick roll, without knowing what the hell I was doing. But I never liked drum solos. I hate them actually, unless they're the sort of thing Krupa did. As a kid I thought they were so corny, but now.... To me, though, Krupa's great moments were not the drum solos but his time, and the way he'd spark the band. Like 'Let's Dance' on the Carnegie Hall album—it's amazing. It's only a double-time thing—I know what it is—but the way it lifts that orchestra is an incredible thing to hear.

"Another guy like that, who we're going to miss when he's gone, is Art Blakey. He's got that press roll that takes the roof off the room. Even though you know what it is, no one is ever going to do it like he does. It's not just the volume, although it's like thunder, but it's the feel as well. In his hands, it's alive.

"It's like Dave Tough," Charlie continues. "The stuff he did with Woody Herman is fantastic. 'Northwest Passage' is incredible, where he rides that swishy hi-hat to such a point that it's completely overloaded, and you could almost say that he's just bashing. But within the context of Chubby Jackson's bass thumping along, it's amazing. It's all sound. It's completely over the top in the way that Elvin goes over the top, you know? If it was slightly wrong it would be *bad*," Charlie says, spitting out the word with distaste. "But because it's so right, it's more than good. It's daring, actually. If he had gotten tired halfway through the tenor solo and slowed down just a fraction, it wouldn't have been a steam train any longer. But it wasn't just the tempo; it was the volume and the spirit—everything about it.

"It was like some of the things Philly Joe Jones did. To actually take on some of those breaks he did on 'Milestones,' or he'd do that fast left-hand thing with a brush in the middle of some ballad, and if he had made one flick wrong, it would have showed up like..." Charlie trails off, laughing. "You know what it is? Balls. You feel like that when you hear the 'Gone,' solos," Charlie says, referring to a track from the Miles Davis *Porgy And Bess* album, which features a large orchestra conducted by Gil Evans. "That's just crazy but it's pure Philly Joe. I mean, imagine sitting in this studio with all of these musicians, and Miles Davis is staring at you, and you know if you f—up they've got to do it all again...God! To be that confident! That's jazz, you know. That really is."

Although the London scene that Charlie

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grew up in didn't offer as many opportunities to see American jazz musicians as he would have liked, there were several prominent local drummers to observe and be inspired by. "The most wonderful drummer in London," Charlie says, "and the guy we all learned from, was Phil Seamen. Phil was as daring as Philly Joe. He would have all Philly's stuff just after a record would come out. But that's what would happen in London. You'd hear it on a record, and then all the talented ones would do it. There were a hundred guys who sounded like Tony Williams after Tony joined Miles, and rightly so. I think that's one indication of how great Tony is. It's a high form of flattery."

"London was a very local sort of scene," Charlie continues. "It was a bit like when you hear Louis Hayes talk about New York City, or Philly Joe Jones talk about Philadelphia. Ginger Baker was very much around London when we were both young. But Ginger had all of the facility that I never had," Charlie laughs. "And he had terrific strength. Although he used two bass drums, he had feet that could play that fast anyway. And his drumkit—every note you got out of it you had to work for. He had a tiny little bass drum, and he had really thick calf heads on all the drums. He used to play a K Zildjian ride cymbal that had rivets all around it—rather like what we imagined Art Blakey used, although being English we never saw a lot of these people. But Ginger would have this cymbal but-

toned down so tight that it wouldn't move. I like a cymbal that you can lay on, and it will carry through to the next beat. But if you wanted Ginger's cymbal to sizzle, you played on it. If you missed a note, you'd notice it. I played on his kit a few times, and I broke so many sticks because it was so hard to physically play on it. But Ginger played it."

"He was a very schooled player. The Cream thing, to me, was a place where Ginger could say, 'Here's how good I am,' and people would listen to him, whereas they didn't listen to him with the Graham Bond Trio. That was an amazing trio: Jack Bruce, Graham Bond, and Ginger Baker. When they'd have those *Playboy* polls and all that, Ginger was the only English drummer that I thought actually deserved to be there. You'd get Keith Moon, who was an amazing player, and very 'one of a kind,' which is the best thing you can be, actually. But to have Keith Moon above Buddy Rich was kind of.... It's two different things, of course, but I still couldn't believe it, as lovely a player as Keith was. And the same with Ringo and myself. One time, Tony Williams was like number four and I was number three. Stupid! That was when Tony was at his peak, and I just couldn't believe it. But when Ginger made number one, I thought it was kind of deserved. I didn't feel embarrassed about him being there as an Englishman. I always thought he was that good. A crazy man, but a marvelous drummer."

Despite Charlie's love of jazz, his opportunities to play it have been limited. His first gigs were with jazz combos in East End London pubs, and he also played jazz in Denmark, where he lived for a couple of years. When he returned to England, he worked briefly with the Dudley Moore trio, but then got caught up in the "skiffle" craze that hit England. From there Charlie went to blues, and that led to the Rolling Stones.

But in 1978, the seeds were planted for Charlie's return to jazz. Ian Stewart, long-time Stones pianist/road manager, assembled an eight-piece boogie-woogie/blues band called Rocket 88. Charlie was the drummer, and several of London's top jazz musicians were also involved. The band gigged around England and Germany, and recorded an album for Atlantic in 1979 (released in '81).

The Stones took up the next few years of Charlie's life, but finally, on November 18, 1985, Charlie's longtime dream came true as the Charlie Watts Big Band (later known as the Charlie Watts Orchestra) made its debut at Ronnie Scott's in London. The repertoire was made up of tunes by the likes of Benny Goodman, Lester Young, and Charlie Parker. Several of the musicians from Rocket 88 were involved, but the band had grown from eight to thirty-three, and included drummers John Stevens and Bill Eyden in addition to Charlie. "About half my band are young, avant-garde players, and the other half are people that I'd always wanted to play with," Charlie says.



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"Some of them I had actually played with, but most of them I hadn't. A lot of the guys in my orchestra were people I used to go and see playing in clubs when I was 16." The orchestra released an album on Columbia in 1986 called *Live At Fulham Town Hall*, and later that year did a five-city tour of Hartford, Philadelphia, New York, Boston, and Toronto. "It's great to have saxophones playing the entire melody," Charlie comments, "instead of just a few bars in the middle of 'Miss You.'

"For me," Charlie continues, "being a jazz musician is like the ultimate. It's the peak. Miles Davis, I think, is wonderful on every level. I have the greatest respect and admiration for him. And he is the last great band leader. When you see Miles work his band, it's like the way Duke Ellington or Count Basie led a band. It's such a facility to be able to bring a band up and down at the right time and all that. It's not something I could ever have with my band; I'm not that sort of person. But to see Gil Evans work a band—marvelous! He seemed to be one of those people who could make the musicians feel comfortable and get anything out of them. And Ellington—he knew when to interrupt. There might always be a solo in a particular place, but he knew exactly how long it should go on each night. An amazing facility those people had."

"The last time I saw Miles live he had Al Foster with him, and a young guy named Bill Evans on saxophone. It was wonderful

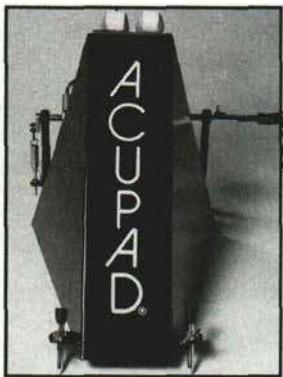
to see him work that band. I mean, he had guitar and electric bass, but it was just like Duke Ellington. He's never had a bad band. That's what I mean about being a band-leader. He has that facility to find Philly Joe Jones and Wynton Kelly, and John Coltrane, and Tony Williams, and he just goes on and on. To do it right every time is staggering, I think. It takes knowing what you want. Another guy with great bands is Chico Hamilton. He's an outstanding player himself, but I think he's even more talented as a catalyst. A lot of great players have passed through his bands."

But as much as Charlie still admires the great jazz musicians, he spends less time going to clubs these days. "I don't know where to find these people anymore," Charlie says, sadly. "I'd love to go and see Mickey Roker or Billy Higgins, but you're very lucky if you can find where they're playing. I'm sure they play every day of the week, but where, I don't know. There was a time when I would have known that, but I don't anymore. I look in *The New Yorker* sometimes, but there will only be about three people in there that I know. Unless you actually live in New York and go to these clubs all the time, you can't keep up with it. Whereas I used to know all of them."

"When I came over to America with my orchestra, all these record company people told me that there was this big revival in jazz, and I thought, 'Oh, great.' But apart from a few people playing, I was unaware of it. I mean, I'm sure someone like Mel

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Lewis could talk about going to one spot to see Dave Tough and then seeing Shelly Manne at another. But I don't know where you'd go to do that anymore, in New York, London, or anywhere. That, to me, would be a revival in jazz, where you could walk down the street and see Tony Williams with an octet, and Jack DeJohnette with a trumpet player, and there would be three piano players playing on the same street. A jazz revival isn't somebody like me putting together a band to play a few songs that are associated with jazz, or somebody reissuing a few Blue Note records. It's when you actually get people going to see jazz musicians play.

"I suppose jazz is a minority music, but I'd love to have lived when it wasn't—

when you could go to the Savoy and see two orchestras, one at either end of the stage. It must have been bloody marvelous. Photographs are all we've got, me and you, to see what 52nd Street was like. One club alone would draw hundreds of people. It must have been fantastic."

"What are you wearing tonight?" Keith Richards asks Charlie, who is standing in front of a rack hung with the Stones' stage clothes.

"All white with a black T-shirt, enhanced..."

"Endless conference with wardrobe about this, no doubt," Keith interjects.

Charlie grins. "En-nahnced," he continues, in a mock, ultra-sophisticated tone,

"by white pumps."

"You're not going for any glitter—a rhinestone here or there?" Keith teases, and then turns to me and says, "Here's a man who will take a bow with everybody on stage going berserk, the cops screaming 'Move it! Move it!' and he'll go back to his drums and move his drumsticks one millimeter to the left, because what he left behind visually displeases him. So how can you talk about a person like this?" he laughs. "Everybody says what a charming guy Charlie is, but you never see him, he never comes to say hello. You've got to go and find *him*. He's moulting away in some hotel room, or hanging out in wardrobe, checking out materials...Jesus, look at those trousers," he says, turning to Charlie, who has just stepped into a pair of immaculately tailored white pants.

"What's the matter with them?" Charlie asks.

"Nothing," Keith answers, "but who's going to see 'em? You might as well..."

"Tell him that's not the point," Charlie instructs me, as he adjusts the belt on the back of his matching white vest.

"That's not the point," I say.

But Keith has had a sudden revelation. "Oh, now I understand the transparent bass drum head!"

Charlie gives a sheepish grin. "I never thought of that," he says.

"Right," Keith says, roaring with laughter. "It's so they can see your footwear and the Savile Row tailoring on your turn-ups. You never thought of it! Did you see the way he was *almost* convincing when he said that?" Keith asks me. "You should have an Oscar," he laughs, addressing Charlie again. "You should have had one years ago."

Keith gets up and heads for the door. "You've learned more about Charlie Watts in the last five minutes than you'd ever learn from asking questions," he tells me. "I've just learned something about the right bastard myself," he adds, giving Charlie a hug.

As Keith leaves the room, Charlie grins, shaking his head. "We're like big kids, aren't we?" Perhaps, but what really struck me as I watched Keith and Charlie together was the true affection they have for each other, which was very obvious underneath the ribbing that was going on. And on a more musical note, I found myself wondering how a guy who grew up trying to emulate black American jazz drummers ever ended up in a band with a guitar player who wanted to be Chuck Berry.

"I dunno," Charlie answers. "I suppose the common ground was playing in clubs. That was the only work you could get at the time. I started playing with Alexis Korner, who played the blues. The blues, to me, was Louie Armstrong playing 'St. Louis Blues,' but then I met Cyril Davies, who played harmonica in Alexis Korner's band. He was the first guy I heard play Jimmy Cotton and Little Walter stuff."

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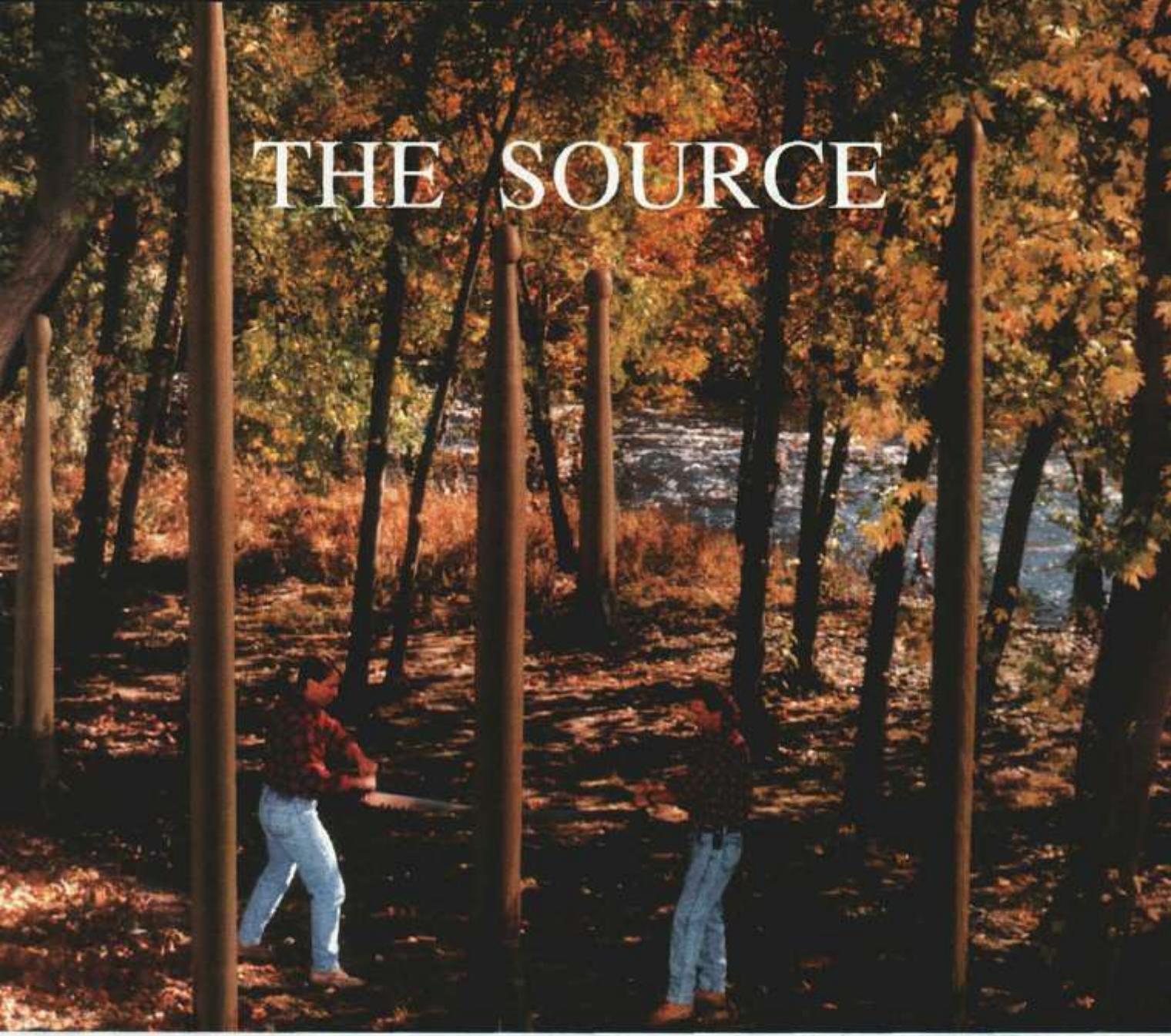
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magnet for a lot of serious musicians around London, who would often sit in. A guitarist named Brian Jones was part of that scene, and his specialty was bottleneck guitar in the tradition of Elmore James. It also drew Mick Jagger and Keith Richards, who, on their own, were trying to learn material by Muddy Waters, Jimmy Reed, and Chuck Berry. "I'd heard Chuck Berry," Charlie says, "but I never really listened to him until I met Keith. Then I heard a guy called Earl Phillips, who was the drummer with Jimmy Reed. And Earl Phillips was as tasteful in his genre as Joe Morello was in his. It was very fine drumming, and I loved the sound of it."

Eventually, Jones, Richards, and Jagger joined forces and became the Rolling

Stones. "And then I got asked to play with them," Charlie says. "I enjoyed being with them; I still do. And it's a band, you know. As a band, we're incredible. But we're not very good without each other, to be honest with you. Take me out of this and I flounder. I can just about get through a blues or something. I'm not saying that this is the only band I've ever played with, or that I won't go on stage without Bill Wyman. But I feel most comfortable with him there.

"I always feel most comfortable with people I've made mistakes in front of, and then I'm fine," Charlie smiles. "I'll never forget Herbie Hancock in Paris. He came down with a guy called Bill Laswell, who was working with Mick at the time. And when Herbie came in, I was terrified. When

most people say 'Herbie Hancock,' they think 'Headhunters.' But to me, Herbie was more than that. We weren't going to record; he just wanted to play. And I actually started to feel quite comfortable after I made a few mistakes," Charlie laughs. "I'm very much like that. I get very overwrought by people. I get terribly anxious before I play. I'm alright once I sit down, but before going on I get nervous. Even if it was a small club with three people at the bar, I'd be nervous.

"I think it's what I said before: The drums frighten me," Charlie says. "I once tried to play Simon Phillips' drumkit, but there were too many of them; they frightened me. Simon is a marvelous drummer who has the most amazing facility, and because of that he can use all of those toms and get this great load of sound. I can't think of more than one up here and another one down there. I mean, I can sit there and go 'doing, doing, doing,'" he says, miming someone going around a large set of toms, "but to actually use them.... I can never get those spaces in between what I'm doing. I can never think in those terms."

"When it comes to my playing, I can't really talk about it. I can talk to you about something Mel Lewis played, but when it comes to me being in the Rolling Stones for several years, I don't know how to talk about it. Jazz is my love. I try to emulate that. It's very hard if you're not that good, and I'll never be that good. I don't have that kind of mind or facility. Whereas Buddy Rich, to me, had everything going. Same with Louie Bellson. Another guy who is a fantastic drummer, but kind of a crazy man, is Jake Hanna. He was in the last great band that Woody Herman had, and I also saw him with Supersax. He is one of those guys who is from the school of Shelly Manne and Mel Lewis. Anything you ask, they can play it well. Not with jive, really well. The lovely thing about Shelly Manne was that he never stopped, his whole life, playing with interesting bands. I saw him with a band called the L.A. Four. A very good drummer named Jeff Hamilton took over when Shelly died. But to play that quietly and still keep it jumping like Shelly Manne could be very difficult. When you're playing with acoustic guitar or piano, your technique has to be spot on. When you play waltz time and all that, you can't bash the bass drum or it would sound ridiculous. And to keep a slow tempo is one of the hardest things. A master of that in a totally different vein was the guy with Otis Redding, Al Jackson. The time on 'Try A Little Tenderness' is just as hard to play as a drum solo."

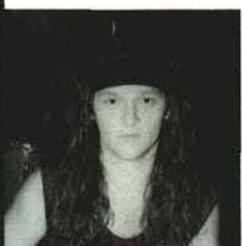
"Jim Keltner is another marvelous drummer, and a lovely guy. He's one of those crossover guys who can do anything, and he is a master of them all. He did a lot of things in London years ago, and he used to come and see us play a lot because he's friends with [trumpet player] Jim Price and [saxophonist] Bobby Keys, who were working with us then. And Jim would stand

Drum School Part 1

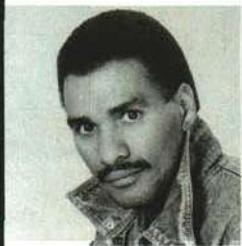
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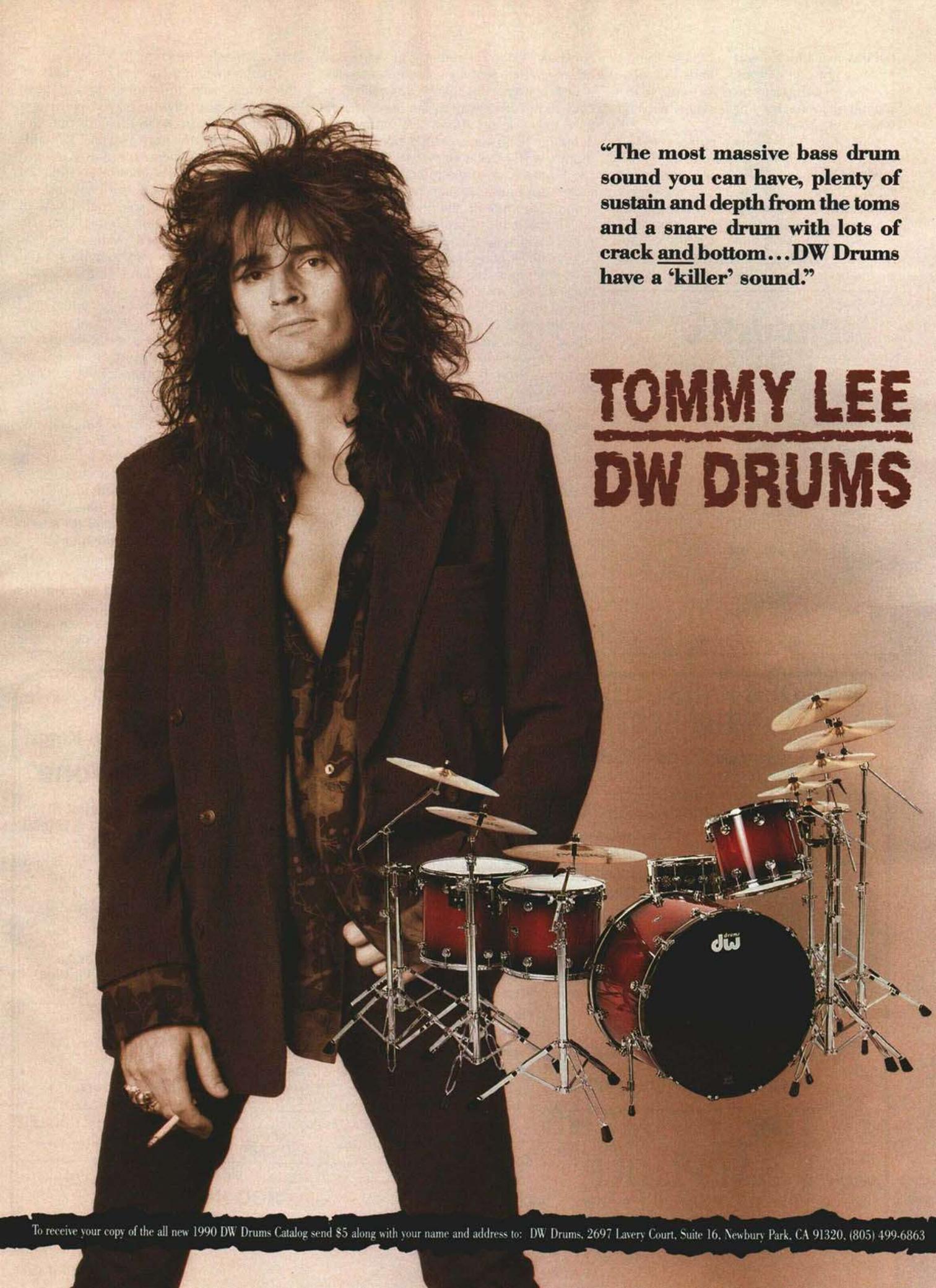
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A black and white photograph of Tommy Lee, the drummer for Mötley Crüe. He is standing behind a DW drum set, which includes a bass drum, several toms, a snare drum, and cymbals. He is wearing a dark, open-collared shirt over a patterned button-down shirt and has long, dark, wavy hair. He is looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. A cigarette is visible in his right hand.

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behind me and analyze all these things. Jim has got one of those minds that analyzes everything, and he'd be trying to explain it all to me, but I never knew what he was talking about."

One thing that Keltner pointed out to Charlie was his habit of coming off the hi-hat with his right hand whenever he would hit a backbeat with his left. "I was never conscious of it until Jim mentioned it," Charlie comments. "But I do it a lot. I've noticed it on videos, and it actually annoys me to see myself doing it. It really comes, I think, from coming down heavy on the

backbeat. I don't use that grip that Ringo uses. I did for a few years, because I thought it was popular. But then I was told to go back to the other way by Ian Stewart, who used to set up my drums. He virtually ordered me to go back to what he called 'the proper way of playing,'" Charlie laughs. "So I went back to the military grip, and I really do prefer it, but because of the amount you ride on the hi-hat, I suppose I got in the habit of pulling the other stick out of the way to get a louder sound."

"I've never consciously done it, but a lot of times when we make a record I am consciously *not* doing it, because sometimes you hear the beat go 'di-dit, di-dit,'" Charlie says, tapping out notes that are slightly squeezed together. "That works on some things, but other times you need it perfectly even because the microphone records everything in such a nit-picky way."

"Of course, recording is just electronic impulses," Charlie adds. "When you hit the skin on a bass drum, it creates an impulse, and they send that through this bit of wire and into a machine. And now a lot of people cut out the drum itself and just use a pad, which doesn't need to be played, it just has to be hit. And there's a lot of difference between hittin' a drum and *playing* it."

"I actually do enjoy recording," Charlie says, "because it's another chance for us to play. But to be in there all the time.... Studio drummers are the most amazing people in the world. They're stuck in there all the time with engineers, and they never

know what they're going to actually play."

Charlie certainly enjoyed being back in the studio with the Stones to cut *Steel Wheels*. Reportedly, he played with such spirit that he wore Keith Richards out. "It's not that I had come from a layoff," Richards says. "Usually, when you start a record with the Stones, you're coming in cold from having a year or two off. But I had just got off the road from my solo tour. I was in pretty good shape. But Charlie came in with this determination. Maybe he was trying to teach me a lesson for goin' off and playing with Steve Jordan," Keith laughs.

"I don't know what he's talking about," Charlie responds with a grin when told about Richards' comment. "I'm not that sort of person. Steve is a lovely player. Nice man, but crazy. Most drummers are crazy, aren't they? Maniacs. They don't all start off crazy, but they end up that way."

"Doing the record was very comfortable," Charlie says. "It was a lot of fun, actually. We had to do it very quickly, but I think it's a good album. I looked at this like going into the army," he adds with a smile. "It's a year out of my life. We had to do four things this year: rehearse a record, do a record, rehearse for a tour, and do a tour. We're now on the fourth of the four."

As he has done on previous tours, Charlie got involved with the stage design, bringing into play his background as a graphic artist. Charlie's interest in clothing also surfaced when he and Mick Jagger consulted with designer Lance Yates on the Rolling

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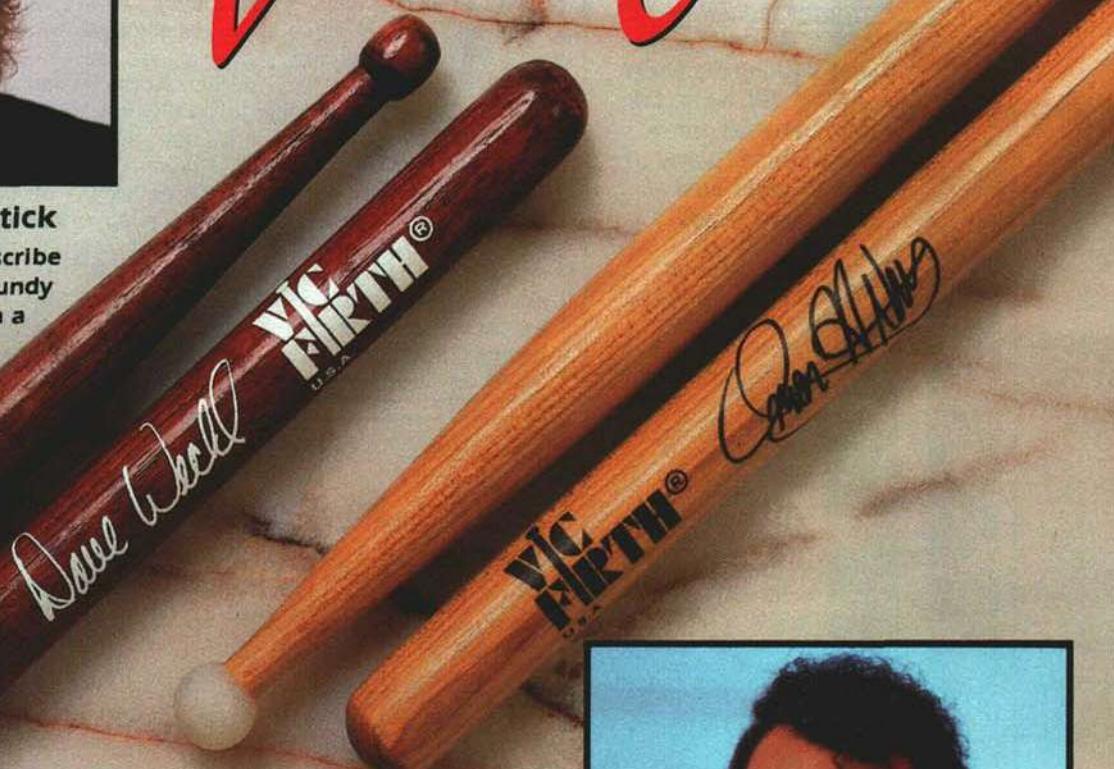
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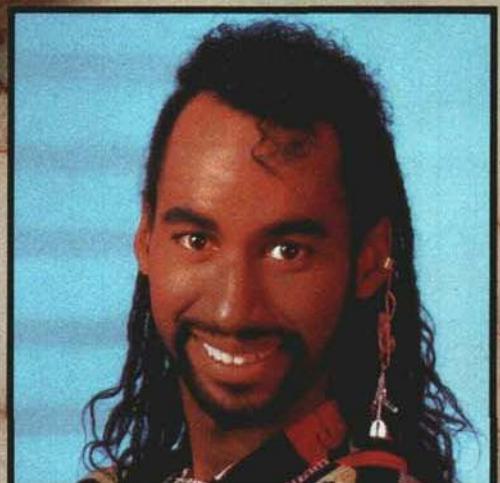
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Stones Fashion Collection, which arrived at selected clothing stores during the fall tour. "It's good fun, and it makes going on the road more interesting," Charlie comments.

Overall, Charlie seems quite happy to be a member of the Rolling Stones. "A lot of guys would envy my position," he says, "because this is a great band to play with, and we're very well paid for what we do. And yet, we're in a very funny position. It's a very demanding one, in one respect. We can't play in a club, like most bands. We can't even play for fun. I mean, I can do it on my own, but the minute we all get together, it's a *whole* other thing. We're very lucky that we're able to play these sort of places," he says, gesturing outside towards the 50,000-seat stadium the Stones are about to perform in. "But we can't just go into a club and play a blues," he says, somewhat sadly.

"As far as drumming goes," Charlie says, "I haven't thought much about playing the past few years. Although I have played, it hasn't occupied much of my life. I didn't really think we were going to do this tour until last year sometime, but it's not something I really thought about. If I practice, I practice on my leg with very heavy sticks. I've done that for years. But it's like therapy more than practice. I still have a love of doing it, but I don't have the mad enthusiasm I once had. I suppose all that enthusiasm is part of being young. Maybe I'm just getting older."

But an hour later, watching Charlie on

stage with the Rolling Stones, I'm reminded of our discussion of Jo Jones and Kenny Clarke. The body and gray hair might be that of a 48-year-old man, but the spirit is considerably younger, as Charlie's drumming propels the Stones through a spirited two-and-a-half hour show. I'm also reminded of what Charlie said about having to see someone play live. From the sound on recent Stones records, one might assume that Charlie is smacking the daylights out of his snare drum, but live, he's not really playing all that hard. His drive comes from enthusiasm and conviction, not from brute strength. "There's an undefinable thing about drummers," Keith Richards says. "A lot of cats have good hands, and they might be making all the right moves, and playing incredible paradiddles and shit, but it's like the playing just keeps going down the runway and never, ever takes off. Whereas with Charlie, you suddenly realize that you're floating a few inches off the ground. Yeah, Charlie," Keith smiles. "I just look at him and I relax."

"Sometimes," Charlie told me earlier, "I get into this thing of wondering what on earth I'm doing making a living by going 'dit dit dit' on a bunch of drums. It's silly, really, a grown man going like that," he laughs. "But I do enjoy it. Playing with this band is a lot of fun, it really is. Outside of this, I don't really know what I'd do. I've tried various things, but they're never quite the same."

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will address the specifics, but somehow the topic subconsciously drifts into the broader scope: the emotional/creative environment surrounding the music, the era, the relationships, the personal struggles that resulted in the music. Somehow his hands and feet played the parts, but the

source of it all was life experience. In Frederick's memories, the drumming never exists alone and of itself. He might not remember an incredible solo he recorded; rather, he's more apt to remember *why* he played it. This holistic sensibility is the reason why he became a great player, why he almost gave it all up at one point, and why he overcame that phase, rejuvenated, and continued his struggle of musical and personal growth. If you must have technique specifics explained, you can attend one of Frederick's many clinics, classes, or private lessons, but if you really want to analyze the roots of his playing, go back to the roots of his life.

"Growing up in Jackson, Mississippi, you were a *neighborhood child*," reminisces Frederick. "A while ago, I went back home and an old lady told me, 'I remember you used to get on that back porch with that drum and drive me crazy, so I knew you were going to be something.' [laughs] I used to practice every day. Once, I got the flu and couldn't play for two or three days. People came to the house and asked my mother, 'Is Frederick going to play?' My drums must have been really bugging them—I know it was takin' them out—but they could handle it. They wanted to know if I was okay and what was going on.

"I always felt I could play anything if I could hear it and feel into it, if it came from the African continuum."

[laughs] I look at young guys now—especially in Detroit—and it's so rough out there. My path was laid out well for me to get my roots together, to deal with my foundation of reading and everything else I had to learn. It grew the way it should have."

Neighborhood child Frederick Waits used to sit on his porch to listen to older neighborhood children like drummer Claude Welles and trumpeter Alfred Alexander rehearse on the porch across the way. As he became bolder, he crawled through the gap in the fence and sat on their porch, captivated by the music that blew over the bar lines and far beyond the border lines of Jackson. "At that point," says Frederick, "I think I had decided that maybe that's what I was going to do, but I didn't really know it because I was still running out, playing with rubber tires and doing whatever 10- or 11-year-olds were doing. But Claude and Alfred had this very serious thing about them that attracted me. They were *digging* for the music that was not available to them. They were *digging* for Dizzy Gillespie and digging for Miles. Music like that wasn't easy to find in Jackson.

"Guys who went away to the Army and the Air Force would always 'come back hip' we would say. They would come back and tell us about Bird. A lot of the guys

from Mississippi would get sent north, stationed at Fort Dix. The first thing they did when they returned home was play us the albums they picked up. A friend of mine came back with a whole bunch of albums by artists like Art Blakey, Max Roach, and he came straight to me. 'Listen to this,' he'd say. People always talked about Gene Krupa, Nat King Cole, Buddy Rich, and I occasionally heard them on the radio. But you never heard Max, Art Blakey. It was hard for me to make the transition. I had been listening to what I *thought* was happening!"

During high school, Frederick developed his skills on the flute and drums. Being a great sight-reader, the flute gave him a chance to play with more school bands and get close to a certain majorette. But his real inspiration and his working experience was coming from the drums. Some musician friends, including his old inspirations Claude and Alfred, helped hook the blooming drummer up with saxophonist Duke Huddleston, who led a sophisticated big band and also contracted his most promising band members to back up name blues and R&B acts that rolled into Jackson. Duke sent Frederick and other orchestra members, dubbed the "Duke Juniors," out on road trips during their school breaks to back up R&B greats like Percy Mayfield, Ivory Joe Hunter, and Sam Cooke. Back home in Jackson, Frederick and the "Juniors" backed visiting blues legends such as Sonny Boy Williamson, John Lee Hooker, and Memphis Slim. "These were people who came to Jackson and got stranded for whatever reason," says Frederick. "Sonny Boy Wil-

These will make



liamson stayed in Jackson for a month or two. I couldn't understand it. Everybody said, 'It's because they have great ladies in Jackson.' [laughs]

"I went to see B.B. King in Jackson, and he lectured to us young players in his dressing room during the whole intermission. Do you know what he lectured on? Bird. B.B. King said, 'Listen to Bird!' I've never forgotten that. B.B. said, 'The blues is our music, but you've got to move it a step, move on with it—intellectualize!' At that time, I didn't realize that we were all on the same pole. When I was playing the blues, I separated jazz and blues in my mind. I didn't realize that they were really in the same element."

During these high school and college years, Frederick was shuttling back and forth between Jackson and Detroit for visitations between his mother and stepmother. It was in the Motor City that he began making inroads into a wider musical scene and landed the Little Willie John job.

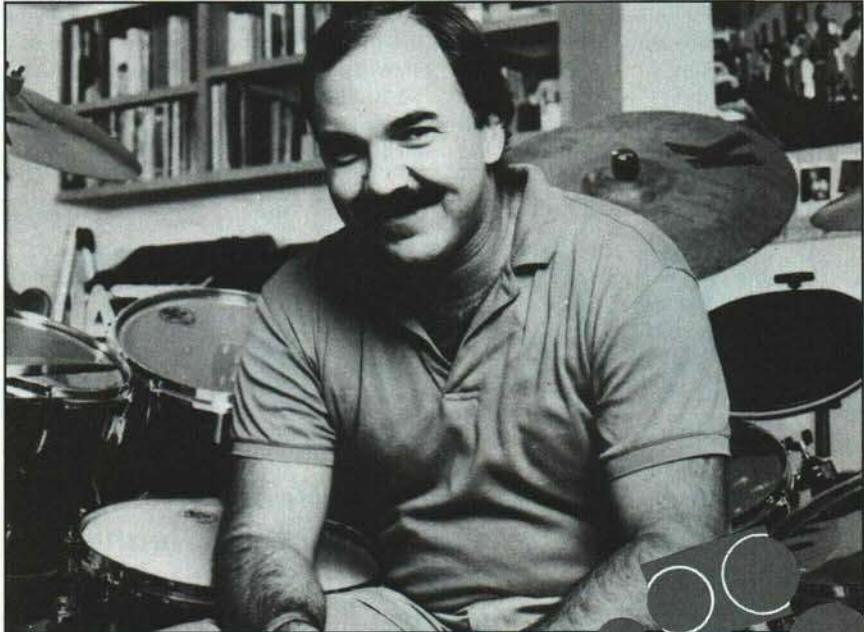
"When I was in Detroit to stay, that's when it actually happened for me," he says. "I worked in a trio with a pianist named Johnny Griffin. I went by to pick up some money from him at Motown, where he was the house pianist. At that time, it was called 'Hitsville.' There was a Smokey Robinson session going on, and the drummer, Benny Benjamin, was late. Johnny said, 'Look, Frederick can play this stuff. Let's just lay something down, and maybe Benny will be in later. Can you do that, Frederick?' I said, 'Yeah, no problem.' It was right down home, the groove was the same thing I had just walked out of Mississippi with. It wasn't as polished as Benny and not ready for recording, but it gave me an opportunity to hear it back and really start improving on it immediately. After a few takes, Benny came, everybody thanked me, and I left. The next

morning, around 9:00, I got a call from the studio saying, 'Do you want to come in and do a date today? Norman Whitfield, the producer, heard you yesterday and wants you to do his date.' It was a fluke. From that point on, it was one thing after another. It just happened to be the thing

that I could do best at that time."

As a house drummer, Frederick became part of the Motown sound, cutting records with the Temptations, Martha Reeves & the Vandellas, Marvin Gaye, and the Supremes. Motown maven Berry Gordy urged Frederick to do a Motown review tour. The

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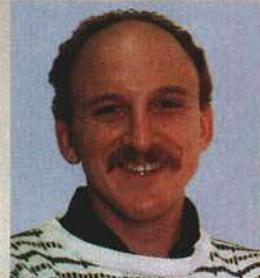
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review featured Motown favorites, including Smokey Robinson, Martha & the Vandellas, and Marvin Gaye, and yielded the first number-one hit, "Fingertips," for a 12-year-old kid named Little Stevie Wonder.

"We recorded that the first week out on tour in Chicago. We opened on a Tuesday and recorded on Wednesday. When the tour reached New York five weeks later, the record was number one in the country. Berry shot that record out there like that, so The Apollo was bombarded. It was like the experience you've seen with the Beatles. I saw one of the anniversary films and realized it was me playing. I never knew it was filmed! At first I didn't want to travel; I wanted to stay in the studio. Because I had recorded all the music, the acts wanted me

so that everything would sound like the records. So Berry insisted and told me that if I didn't do the tour, they would cut off my studio action. I made \$160 per week on the road and had to pay my hotel bills. So you know I didn't want to go because I was making \$250 to \$300 per week in the studio—which was also nothin'. [laughs] But it was a wonderful experience. I'm so grateful for it.

"Benny Benjamin taught me how to relax on the groove. He taught me to lay back and let it happen; that would give me the momentum that I needed. A lot of the shows would be so loud that I felt I had to bash out. Benny said, 'No, let your groove carry it.' I didn't understand. I thought, 'But I can't even hear what I'm doing on the

drums.' [laughs] Eventually it happened, and I felt the music just...pull me. My groove elevated everything and still popped all the way through. So I began to relax more because we were doing five shows a day of nine or ten acts. When we came off the stage at the end of the show, the half-hour call for the next show was already in.

"Hank Crosby wrote very good drum charts for the Motown show. You see, I was a 'rarity'; they didn't have a lot of reading drummers. When I walked in there, they just took it for granted that I didn't read. On a few dates, I would look at the trumpet parts because they would try to explain to me where the breaks were. Finally, I said, 'Why don't you write it out?' and they really thought I was joking. They gave it to me, and I went right through it. Hank said, 'What? We've got a reading drummer?' [laughs] Then he started writing some very nice charts, which he had always wanted to do for the drums. In two years, I really worked a lot, every day—sometimes from 10:00 in the morning until 2:00 the next morning. That was a heck of a schooling."

In the meantime, Frederick was tapping the best of both musical worlds in Detroit, becoming part of the burgeoning jazz scene and making lasting bonds with friends that were also to eventually make names for themselves. He began subbing for a local drummer named George Goldsmith, whose talents Frederick still raves about today. The heavyweight trio included bassist Cecil

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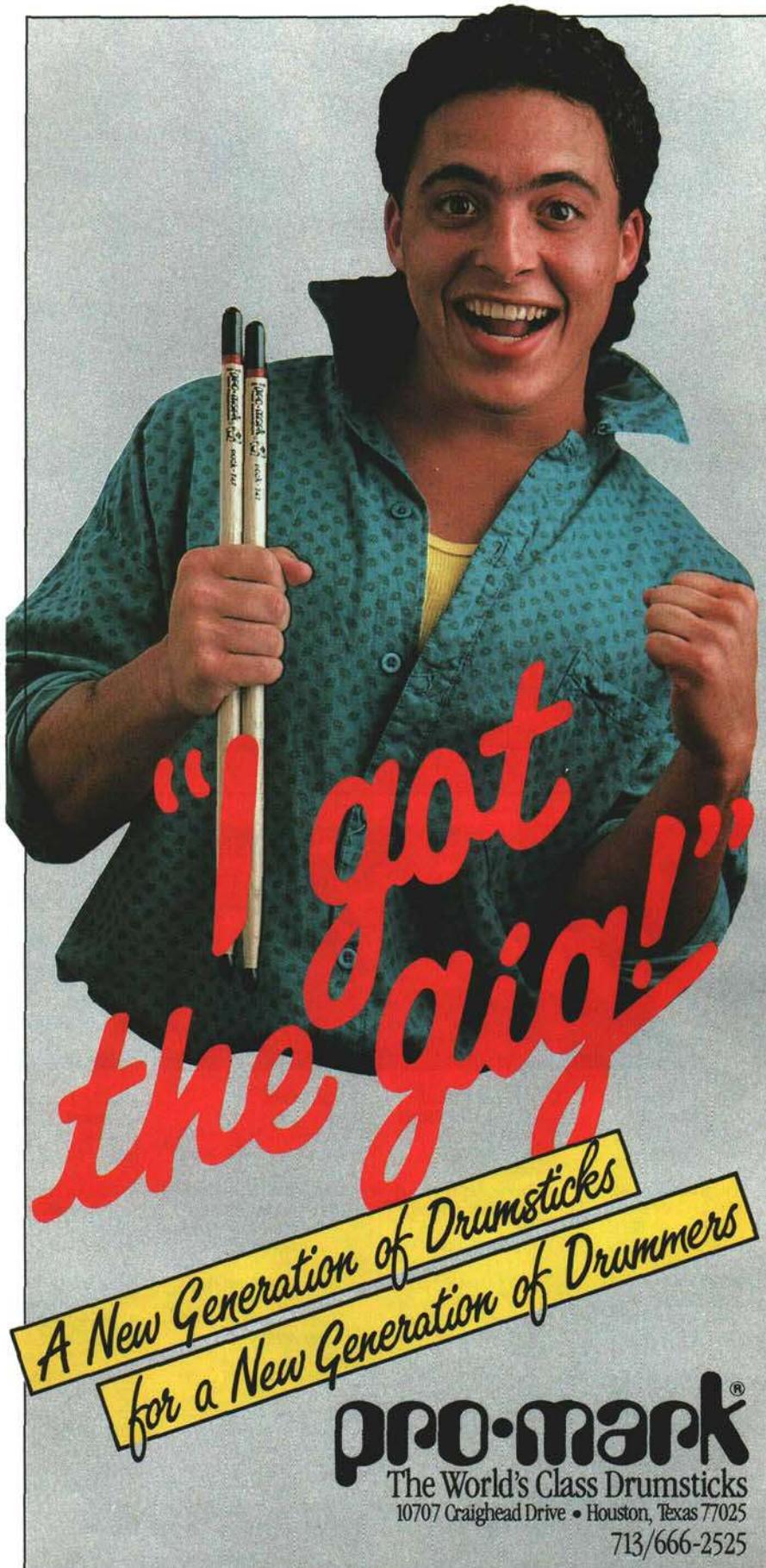
McBee and pianist Kirk Lightsey, sometimes augmented by saxophonist Bennie Maupin. "Bennie bombarded me with musical knowledge," says Frederick, "because there was so much I didn't know." It was Maupin who turned Frederick on to a jolting musical catharsis contributing to his eventual decision to dedicate his full efforts to jazz. "Bennie took me to my first John Coltrane gig. I'll never forget that. It was at a place called The Minor Key, around '62 or '63. We got there early because Bennie loved John and knew him. The Minor Key was a big barn of a place, one of the best coffee houses of that era. It had a very good sound system and a great nine-foot piano. I sat right in front of the drums, propped my feet on stage and waited patiently. I had heard about this; I had heard Elvin on records but had never seen the group in person.

"Trane came in, then Jimmy Garrison, Eric Dolphy, McCoy, and Elvin. That—that was the most frightening night of my life. It was too much to come at you. And to watch Elvin in person: I had never seen anything like that before. And the power that John was putting out.... I just had never seen that kind of energy put into jazz before. I sat through three or four pieces. They played *long*; John sometimes played a tune for an hour. I had to leave. I got up and Bennie said, 'Where are you going?' It was too much; I was sick to my stomach, my nerves went off. I went to the bathroom and literally threw up, came back and had one of the worst headaches of my life. We left, and the next night, I called Bennie and said, 'Let's go. Let's go hear John.' He said, 'Okay, but are you alright?' I said, 'I'm fine.' That night, I sat right in front of Elvin again. I was not going to give up. I got right in there, braced myself and got ready, boy. [laughs] I stayed the whole night."

In the basement of Frederick's building is a spacious drum studio. He's planning to prepare the space to allow for more teaching time. Earlier this afternoon, he had met with a jazz drummer and teacher from New Zealand who is taking a drum sabbatical in New York. At the end of his lesson, the visitor remarks to Frederick, "This is really a different approach, quite refreshing."

Frederick enjoys being involved in music education—as long as it includes passion. Once an institution sits on its complacent, over-starched butt, he's turned off. From back-to-the-streets education like the Jazzmobile and prison and school presentations, to the loftier position as a Rutgers faculty member, Frederick has passed the word on in his own passionate teaching style. He also travels as a guest artist to various college clinics and classes.

"I've found that in academia, education can sometimes be taken as a game: just a matter of keeping schedules and not about turning these young people on. But then there are the students and teachers who are very serious about it. Fortunately, I've been involved in situations where the emphasis was on turning them on—within



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schedules. [laughs] I've been in lecture and teaching situations across the country, including with Dr. Billy Taylor and other people of that stature, where I've seen departments structured in such a way that the young people really don't get the essence of what the music is about.

"There are a lot of guys here who have come out of institutions like Berklee, North Texas State—places that turn out quote unquote jazz musicians. But even many of them don't really *get it* until they come here and begin to hang. It's good to study, but then it's time to get inside and see what it's really about. Unfortunately, of course, they do need that *degree* for credibility in order to teach and have something to fall back on, which is very important now."

The city-funded Jazzmobile education program at 127th and Madison in Harlem is a labor of love for Frederick that gives something back to the community that has given so much to jazz. "I've been working the Jazzmobile as long as it has been there, since around '68," he says. "Saturdays were put aside for the Jazzmobile. I'll always do that. It's something I just enjoy. It's an inexpensive way for young people to come and learn. It also gave me the chance to analyze my own playing, which helped develop my teaching skills. The Jazzmobile is my baby; it taught me!"

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I'm most comfortable and the most able to express myself is when I'm playing. I'm trying to learn how to better transfer that into teaching, which I've done pretty well, so I'm much more comfortable now. A lot of guys say, 'When you're teaching, you're really still performing.' I can see that in a sense, but I'm not necessarily there to excite the students as a performer. If I'm exciting them because I'm the person they came to see, that's fine. But what I'm really trying to get into them is their own self-discipline, their own sense of self-dignity, and how that can come through their music. So I can't get that 'teaching as performing' idea into my head. I prefer to have an instructional program laid out for them and have them leave with something concrete in their hands that they can refer to, like transcriptions or a book. I subbed for Chico Hamilton this week, covering for his class at the New School. Today, Chico called to say, 'Man, you really left the class up. Could you do more classes?' That makes me feel good."

When Frederick returned from the Motown tour, he received a call from Paul Winter, who was preparing his samba-influenced jazz band for a tour of Brazil. Winter's band was the bridge into the second half of Frederick's career, a period that could be called "The New York Jazz Years." During his two-year stay with Winter, which included two South American tours, Freder-

ick decided he wouldn't be returning to Detroit. He settled in New York, continued with Paul, and also began gigging with other name leaders such as Curtis Fuller and Donald Byrd. "I had really gotten into the crux of what I wanted to do," he says. "And cats were really listening to me because I came in with something different."

After running into his Detroit buddy Bennie Maupin at Birdland, Frederick ended up sharing a loft space with him. The loft became a spot where constant jam sessions brought Frederick and many of his old Detroit comrades in contact with important New York players. Word had already spread in New York about the Detroit drummer with a hip reputation, and

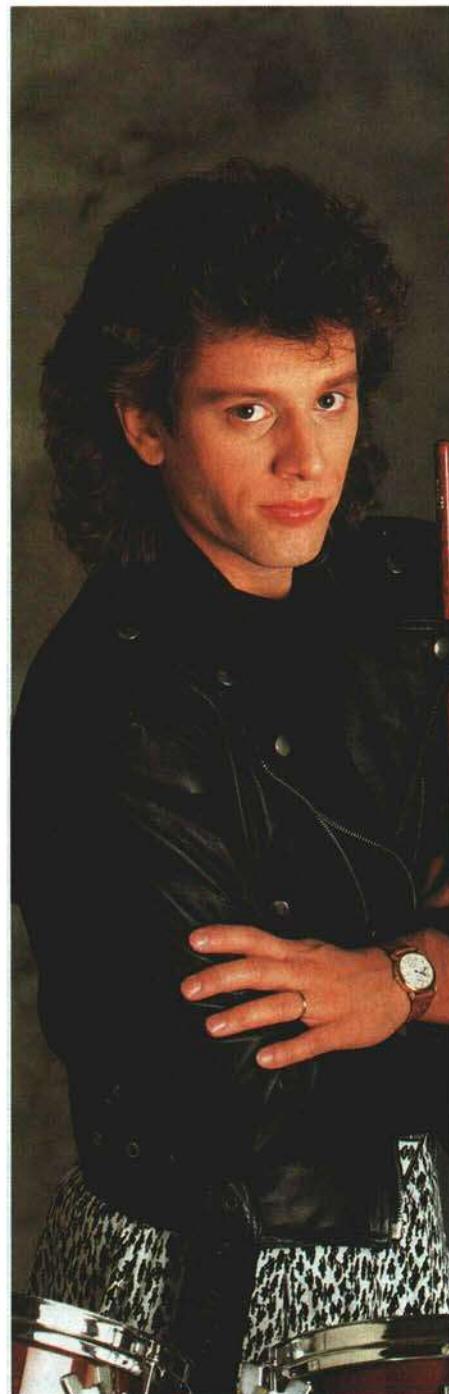
calls increased. The in-demand drummer worked with Kenny Dorham, Cedar Walton, Gerald Wilson's big band, Damita Jo, and vocal dynamo Betty Carter. A stint with the Sonny Rollins trio in June 1966 sealed his reputation further.

After Rollins' gig came a stay with Roland Hanna's New York Jazz Sextet, and then McCoy Tyner's band from '67 to '70—an important period in Frederick's career that yielded some fabulous albums. "One night at Slugs when I was playing with Donald Byrd, McCoy Tyner sat in," recalls Frederick. "It was strange because I didn't know who he was at first, even though I had sat right in front of the Coltrane bandstand in Detroit. Donald had just said, 'A

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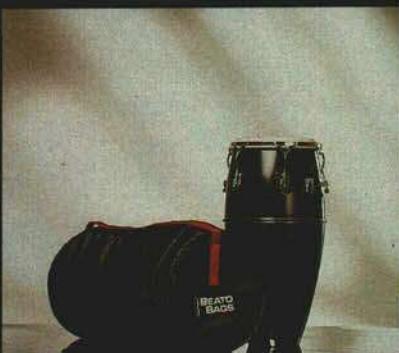
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piano player is going to sit in,' and I didn't think much of it. He came up, and when he played I felt an immediate power grab me. We started with 'Walkin' at a medium, easy tempo, and by the end it was flying and hard-driving. Between the piano and me, we just couldn't lock; there was too much going on. I couldn't relax with what was happening, and evidently, he was not going to let me go easy. Afterwards, I said, 'Who was that?' 'That was McCoy.' The next day McCoy called and offered me a gig! [laughs] I thought it was a total wash-out! The tempo had gone up; I wasn't playing with anything. His whole concept seemed way out from where I was trying to come from. I just didn't think I had made any kind of showing to him, and yet he hired me.

"McCoy opened my ears and my heart. I always felt I could play anything if I could hear it and feel into it, if it came from the African continuum. And McCoy was definitely from the continuum. What many people misunderstood about McCoy is that he was *swinging* all the time. So, if you could swing, you could get into it and have something to bring to his whole concept. My first instinct was to go for my roots; I looked to the gut swing, and that's what he wanted."

The late '60s were fast and frantic for Frederick. In addition to McCoy's band, he toured Europe and the U.S. with Ella Fitzgerald, found time to get married, and

worked with Freddie Hubbard's group on and off for three years. "Hub took us into other things time-wise because he came out of Max and Art. He loved fast tempos, and his technique came through well that way. For me, it was great practice for endurance, which McCoy had definitely prepared me for. I realize now that I didn't have to play as hard as I did; I could have been lighter, but I guess that's what I had to go through at that time."

Another unit that Frederick became devoted to was Lee Morgan's band. "He was *givin'* it to me!" he says. "It was a disciplined band because Lee wrote interesting music. He had us stretched out. If you got his music down, he would give you the same respect with your music. He was in my corner. Lee Morgan—that gentleman was such a beautiful individual. He had love in his heart, and it came out of that horn. Working with him was a pure pleasure. And he loved drums."

The early 70s edition of the trumpeter's group, with Billy Harper, Harold Mabern, Jr., Jymie Merritt, and Frederick, was cutting a distinct identity. Morgan's eponymous double album on Blue Note Records represents that band at a transitional point, stretching their sound into the new decade. Each LP side featured a composition by a different member of the band. The fourth side featured Frederick's first recorded composition, "Inner Passions—Out." The album, released out of chronological or-

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der, was actually Morgan's last recording as a leader. "Lee was coming back from a lot of personal things he had been into," says Frederick. "He was coming back strong. That record was a transitional point for him."

One month after the recording, on February 19, 1972, the progress was cut short. After the band's second set at Slugs, Morgan's former female companion confronted him. An argument ensued, she drew a gun, and fired. "So hard. So hard," says Frederick in measured gravelly tones. "We were knocked off our feet, didn't know what to do. We were just...hurt. Everybody went their separate ways. It affected me; it affected my music."

The sun is finally shining after three days of rain. Frederick is bouncing about the apartment, brewing up an herb tea health concoction. Frederick's spirits are up. There is so much to talk about this afternoon, so much more music from the '70s up until today. Outside of his steadier bands, the short term or intermittent gigs he has played would, in themselves, constitute an incredible career: dates with Joe Williams, Ray Bryant, Walter Bishop, Johnny Hodges, Gary Bartz, Hubert Laws, Novella Nelson, Lena Horne, Rhoda Scott, Pharoah Sanders, Jimmy Heath, Dee Dee and Cecil Bridgewater, Nancy Wilson, Cecil Taylor, Carmen McCrae, Melba Moore, Kenny Barron, Roland Hanna, Stan Getz, and Billy Taylor's trio on and off for five years. And he estimates having played on over 200 albums. He also acted as musical director/contractor for public television's *Soul* show, on which he backed acts like Al Green, Gladys Knight & the Pips, and Cissy Houston. One call he still does regret having had to turn down due to schedule conflicts with McCoy was a call from Miles, the man himself.

But if there is anything more complimentary than getting a call from a legendary leader, it's getting a call from one's own kind. In 1969, Max Roach called, inviting Frederick to join the prestigious percussion ensemble he was forming, M'Boom. The group, composed of Max, Roy Brooks, Joe Chambers, Omar Clay, Fred King, Warren Smith, Ray Mantilla, and Frederick, has been performing concerts and clinics on and off for 20 years that have forwarded the frontiers of percussion music with their deft balance between ensemble composition and improvisation. In *MD*'s M'Boom cover story (Sept. '83), all the group's members agreed that the diversity and rich backgrounds of the individual players have made the group an ongoing mutual learning experience, an institution. Not surprisingly, it was Waits who stressed how much the M'Boom musical experience has also taught the group so much about each other

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as men.

"Multiple percussion instrument" is a term Frederick consciously uses, although it's a mouthful. The moniker grew out of M'Boom's first meetings. These scholarly drum masters all agreed that "drumset" was an inadequate term. "There was a time," Frederick explains, "when a musician couldn't study 'drumset' as a major in school. It wasn't considered an instrument in itself. Instead, one had to study 'percussion.' We wanted to individualize this instrument from the percussion family and define it as a separate, whole instrument in itself. Something 'multiple' was agreed upon because one individual plays all the parts of the instrument with four limbs. That's what makes it unique, and that's the bottom line that defines it. It's the only instrument that developed in this country; it's a totally American concept."

Frederick also belongs to another percussion group, Colloquium III, formed in 1979, which features his improvisatory interaction with two other fine multiple percussion instrumentalists: Billy Hart and Horace Arnold. Although the group only organizes sporadically, the trio is another important forum for Frederick's self-discovery. "Billy and I have often discussed the idea that it's not how many things you do well but how well you do one thing. And then you place that thing in orbit around everything you do. Max Roach said, 'All of us look for a song.' You can hear Max's song whenever he plays. I think the same thing is happening with me. I have played a lot of styles, but I'm still singing my same song. From each situation you learn something to bring to the other."

Another call from "one's own kind" that Frederick takes pride in was Jack DeJohnette's invitation to play with the trio featuring Jack on piano. When drum great Grady Tate fronted his own band as vocalist, he also chose Frederick for the drum seat. Although he has worked with some high-powered cutting-edge units, when asked about his most challenging gigs, the first thing Frederick cites is "accompanying vocalists." "Ella, Carmen, Nancy Wilson, and other great vocalists—each one of them is different, but they

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all gave me the most tremendous lessons in accompaniment that I've ever had," he says. "You will never get that at Juilliard; you'll never get it at Berklee. It's a lesson you have to be there to learn and be ready for: the subtle and definite art of accompaniment with swing and taste. The vocalists have it in their souls; they will make you do it right."

Big band work is another format he cites as being extra-challenging: cutting a record with Basie's band (sans Basie), and especially playing with Mercer Ellington's orchestra, surrounded by chairs filled with grand, historic gentlemen. "I love Ellington's music, and interpreting it was a hell of a challenge to me. It might have been the weight of history on my shoulders that I felt, but all of a sudden *there I was*—sitting right in front of Cootie Williams. It was a very moving feeling when I realized I was getting it together. Cootie just sat there. All he said was, 'Yeah, Freddie. Yeah.' That was all I needed. He sat right next to the cymbals. I don't care how hard I bashed, he just sat there calmly and watched: *[imitates Cootie's matter-of-fact manner]* 'Yeah, Freddie. Yeah.' [laughs]

The past few years have seen Frederick globetrotting on several exciting projects. But still, he expresses bewilderment, as do many jazz peers of his generation, that even at this point in his career, work is sometimes not frequent enough. Being a jazzman—established or not—is *still* a constant financial struggle. "You can't be in a position to wait for phone calls," he stresses. "As far as business goes, you never stop. You just can't rest." Although the gigs may not always come in the quantity he desires, the artistic quality is always top-shelf. He is particularly proud of two trios that he formed: We Three with Stanley Cowell on piano and Buster Williams on bass, and Trio Transitions with Mulgrew Miller on piano and Reggie Workman on bass. Both groups toured Japan and recorded excellent CDs there on the DIW label. Trio Transitions' second CD features guest saxophonist Oliver Lake. The two groups have given Frederick a chance to highlight more of his own compositions, tunes like "My Little Sharif," "Two Faces Of Nasheet," and the polyrhythmic "Mr. Blackwell." This past fall he traveled to

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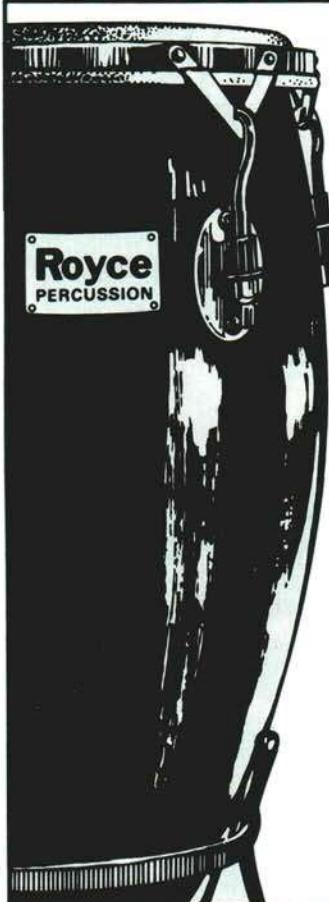
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Europe with M'Boom and also with mallet man Jay Hoggard. Upcoming is a European concert tour with Joanne Brackeen, and he also hopes to unveil another version of his rotating-member band, Colors Revealed. For this particular week, Frederick has a week-long engagement at Sweet Basil's with the Art Farmer/Kenny Burrell All Stars featuring Richard Wyands on piano and Ray Drummond on bass.

"You can't stop": Whether Frederick realizes it or not, it's a favorite phrase of his that frequently pops up in conversations on many a topic. Before all the busy "riffing and running" (another favorite phrase) of the past five years, Frederick faced a test of his own philosophy—the greatest challenge of his life. Hanging high in his living room between stacked record shelves is a framed, black & white blowup of an elegant, beautiful woman beaming with energy. It's Frederick's former wife, Hakima. Due to heart problems, she passed away quite unexpectedly five years ago with Frederick at her side. Their sons, Sharif and Nasheet, were three and thirteen years old.

"There was a period when I considered

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giving it up," he remembers. "I let things bother me. I looked at all the bands and people I had played with. And I realized that after all that, I still had not done my own album, which was a down for me. I felt I must have been short-stepping myself. I thought maybe I hadn't pursued it because I was not really as interested in all of this as I thought I was. Then, listening to my work at that time, I didn't like my playing. I got very critical listening to myself. I didn't like the feeling, anything. But then I realized why. I was broken in half and I had to come to the realization of what I am by myself. I didn't have that other part of

me. Not that I'm saying you shouldn't be able to play without that. But for me—I play from that. I didn't know what I was going to do, but it had to be something else. That 'something' was to soul search for a year or so—really getting down to the essence of me and what inspires me. And I found it was the beauty of this life itself—my family, kids. I met a very nice person eventually after that and got into a relationship. All of that together made me realize that through the last period of my life I may have been a little hard, I may not always have listened like I should have. You begin to see faults in yourself that, of course, you

can clear up. You just have to be able to see it and admit that you see it—that that's tough...."

Editor's Note:

*As we went to press, we learned that
Frederick Waits passed away
November 18, 1989.*

*All of us at Modern Drummer
would like to extend our condolences
to the friends and family of this fine
drummer and gentleman.*



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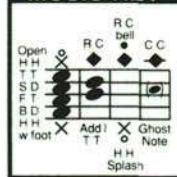




Photo by Laine Wilser

Dave Weckl: "Gdansk"

MUSIC KEY



This month's *Drum Soloist* features Dave Weckl on Paquito D'Rivera's "Gdansk," from his album *Why Not!* (Columbia FCT 39584). On this Latin/funk tune, the drum solo begins after the head. Weckl solos over a dotted 8th- and 16th-note vamp played by the bass and keyboards, and then the solo progresses into a "Montuno" section where Dave continues to solo until the end of the song. Some suggested stickings are given in this solo. In some places in the chart the letter "R" is written above a hi-hat note; this indicates playing on a second pair of hi-hats mounted on the right-hand side of the kit.

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Developing Your Bass Drum Foot

by Colin Bailey



MUSIC KEY



When I was writing my book, *Bass Drum Control*, I discovered a foot pedal technique that has been very effective for me. It is quite different from the one used most today. My approach involves using a lighter touch on the footboard, enabling the beater to be brought out of the drum immediately after contact. The volume required is decided by how far back you take the beater.

There is a "sweet spot" on the footboard approximately 3" to 3 1/2" from the top; always focus on this spot with every beat, using the part of the foot that feels best to you. I use the back of my toes, but the toe or ball of the foot works okay. A moderately loose spring tension seems to be the best, as it makes the pedal more flexible. I keep my heel down most of the time, only lifting when more speed is needed than I can produce heel-down. The lift is only 1/2" to 1", as that is all that the technique requires. However, when I teach this method, I advise playing everything heel-down until the student has a good feel for it.

To begin working with this technique, start by practicing quarter notes at a tempo of quarter note = 100. Keep your heel down and concentrate on all the points mentioned above. Work on building speed as you get more familiar with it, and bring the beater all the way back at first. When you have reached a tempo of quarter note = 225, lift your heel and continue the exercise.

Now try playing the following pattern with your heel down. Start slowly, and increase the tempo. When you've reached a tempo of quarter note = 150, lift your heel for the 8th notes, and then move it down again for the quarters.



Play this next example using the same principles we used for the last example: Once you reach a tempo of about quarter note = 110, keep your heel down for the two quarter notes, and then lift your heel for the triplets. Remember to lift the heel at exactly the moment the beater strikes the head, and not before.



Now I would like you to attempt some of the exercises from my book. These are hand/foot combinations, and when you're playing them, make sure that all snare and bass drum beats are the same volume.

Playing double beats with the bass drum is a challenge. I play two- or three-note combinations by playing one long ankle stroke, followed by a short stroke as the beater comes away from the head. I keep my heel down until the tempo demands that I play the "up-down" method. In the following example, lift your heel as the beater strikes the head and then lower it during the snare beats. (The letter "D" underneath the notes stands for heel down, and the "U" stands for heel up.)

Play the next exercise with your heel down until you work it up to a tempo of about quarter note = 124. At that point, lift your heel on the first of the three bass drum notes, and then lower it on the snare drum 16th note. It can also be played heel-up throughout, but don't lift your heel higher than I mentioned earlier, because it will interfere with the mechanics of the technique. The reason for lifting at all is to relieve tension and eliminate tiredness.

The following example is another good exercise for developing the lift. When practicing this example, lift your heel on the first 16th note, and lower on the 16th-note rest. When you first play this, make a definite "click" on the footboard when you drop your heel, because this will help you get the feel for the up-down motion.

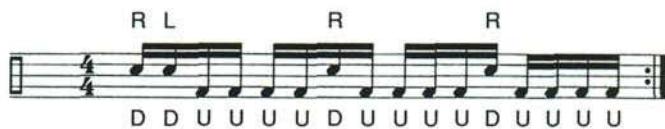
Here's another example for developing the up-down motion. Play this one fairly slow.

If I need to play a greater number of notes on the bass drum (more than four), I use a side-to-side motion on the footboard. I still keep my foot anchored on the sweet spot, and I try to get a dancing effect on the pedal. It definitely requires a light touch,

without pressing down too much. Try this concept on these exercises:



The last examples will help you to develop this method even more. Follow the heel up and down indications, as well as the snare drum stickings.



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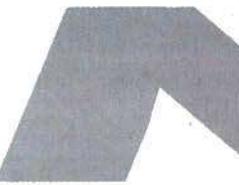
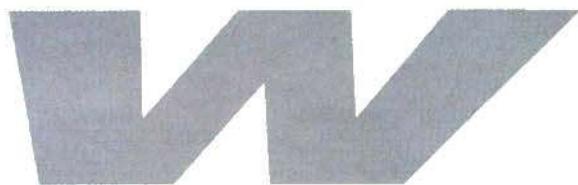
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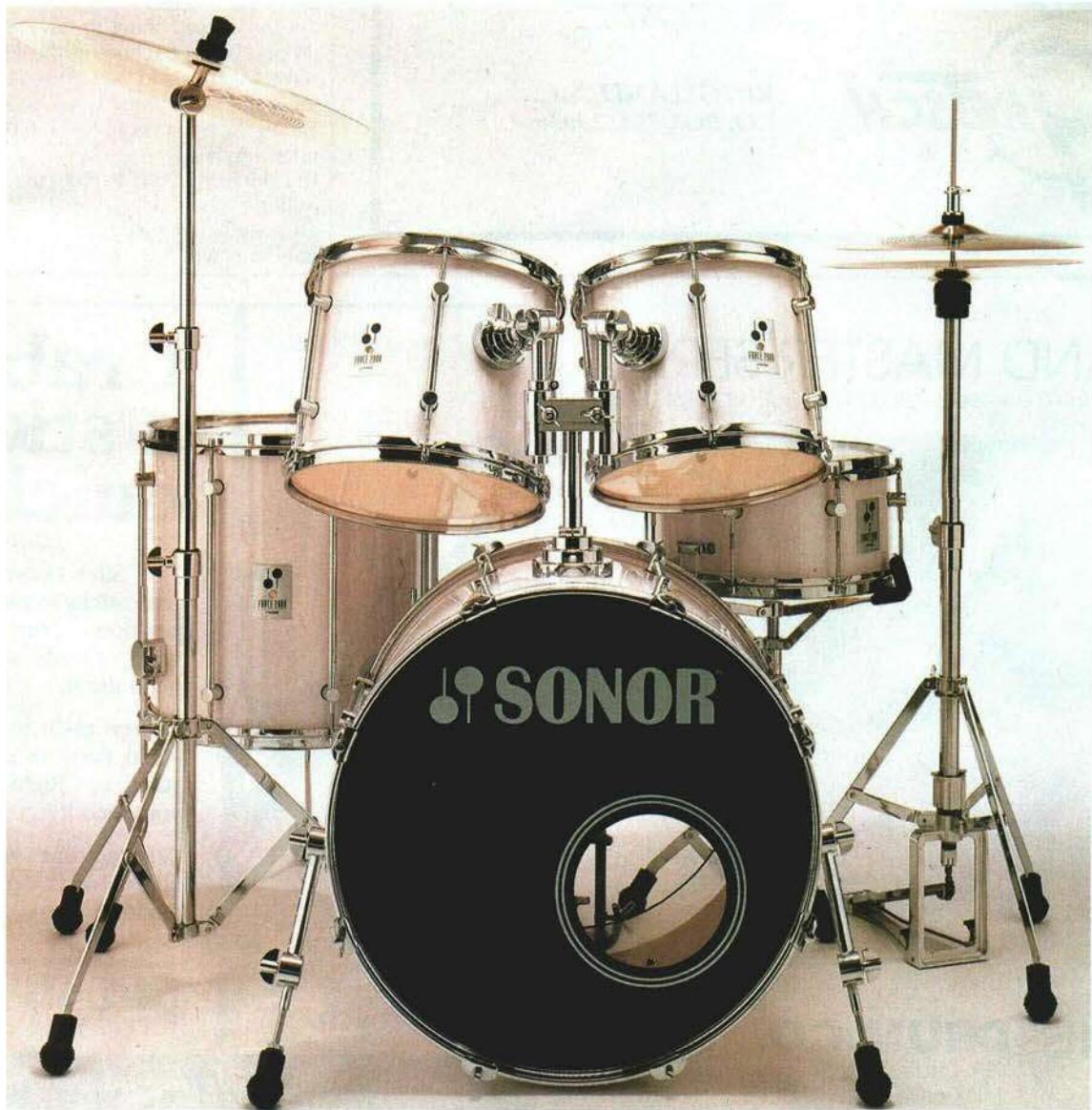
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big Kiss fan because I am a lot younger. It wasn't so much the drumming, but it was the show, too. Peter Criss was a big influence then. Then I saw Rush open for Kiss, and it was all over. Then it was, "I want to play like Peart, only I want to do Kiss. I want to be a rock guy, but I want to be able to do all that stuff," so I woodshedded for years.

RF: How did you woodshed?

DC: I just listened to records. I'd put on every Rush album and play it note for note. I had the same drumset Neil had. And before that, I had every drum Peter Criss had—single bass, lots of concert toms. Then it was Neil Peart—concert toms up here, double-headed toms here, double bass, every China cymbal and windchime you could find. I just listened to people. Then when I heard that live Journey album, I flipped. Smitty did that solo, and it was so cool.

RF: When you woodshedded, you would just listen to albums and play along with them?

DC: Yes. And this is the truth, although it's not the coolest thing to have to say, but I dropped out of school in the 11th grade. I stayed home, and day after day, I played for six, seven hours a day in my garage. When my papa got home at 6:00, that was it for the day.

RF: What did your parents say about your quittingschool?

DC: My father hated it. My father is from Italy and was very strict. My mother was

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more understanding because she knew that was all I wanted to do. I regret it now because I would like to have gotten my diploma. That's important to your family. I think my papa felt he failed me somehow. You ought to see him today, though. He's so proud of me.

When I dropped out of school, I went on tour with a band called the Enemy, and we opened a few shows for Blue Oyster Cult and Foghat. That was radical. My mother was managing the band at the time, and she worked her butt off to get us these shows, and we did really well for being so young. I was 16, the bass player was 18, the guitarist was 19. We did shows in Phoenix and Albuquerque, and at the time it was the biggest experience of my life.

RF: You were saying before that you did take some lessons.

DC: Yes, a little bit. One guy was Jim Tilton, who showed me the basics of rudimental drumming. I studied with him for about a year, but I didn't want to learn that either. Then I took from a guy named Tom Suing, and he taught me all the cool stuff, the Rush stuff, because he was a big Rush fan, too. Then I took from Mel for about six months, and then he left. It wasn't really formal training, but it was learning from everybody. After Mel left, I wanted to learn on my own, so I just got those Rush albums and learned.

RF: Were there other influences along the way?

DC: Yes. Terry Bozzio. I heard him on a UK album, and it blew me away. He was a big influence—he and Smitty. They reminded me of each other, although they're so different.

RF: Where did you get the fusion chops to play with Tony MacAlpine?

DC: Vital Information albums, Smith—that stuff is great. Then I heard Weckl and Co-laiuta. That's why I wanted to get into that. I was playing heavy metal with a band called Wild Dogs, and I was always doing all these licks in this metal thing, and then when I got with Tony's band, it was, "I have to listen to this stuff." I had already started getting into it a little bit, but then I really started listening to those guys. Vital Information's *Global Beat* is an unbelievable album to me. That's where I started getting that kind of feel.

RF: While you were growing up in Portland, what made you know you wanted to be a drummer?

DC: I was a very hyper kid when I was young. And they gave me this stuff called *Ritalin*, which was supposed to calm kids down. While I was in California, I took that stuff for about two years, and finally my mother said, "That's enough, I'm taking him off." I went through withdrawals and it flipped me out. I was crying all the time and all that, and my mother thought, "Okay, I'll put him on drums. That'll get his aggressions out." I was about six years old. They got me on a drumset, and I never stopped. Mom's a good lady. I'm still hyper, but I don't have to take drugs.

RF: While you were growing up in Oregon, did you have a sense that one day you might have to leave there?

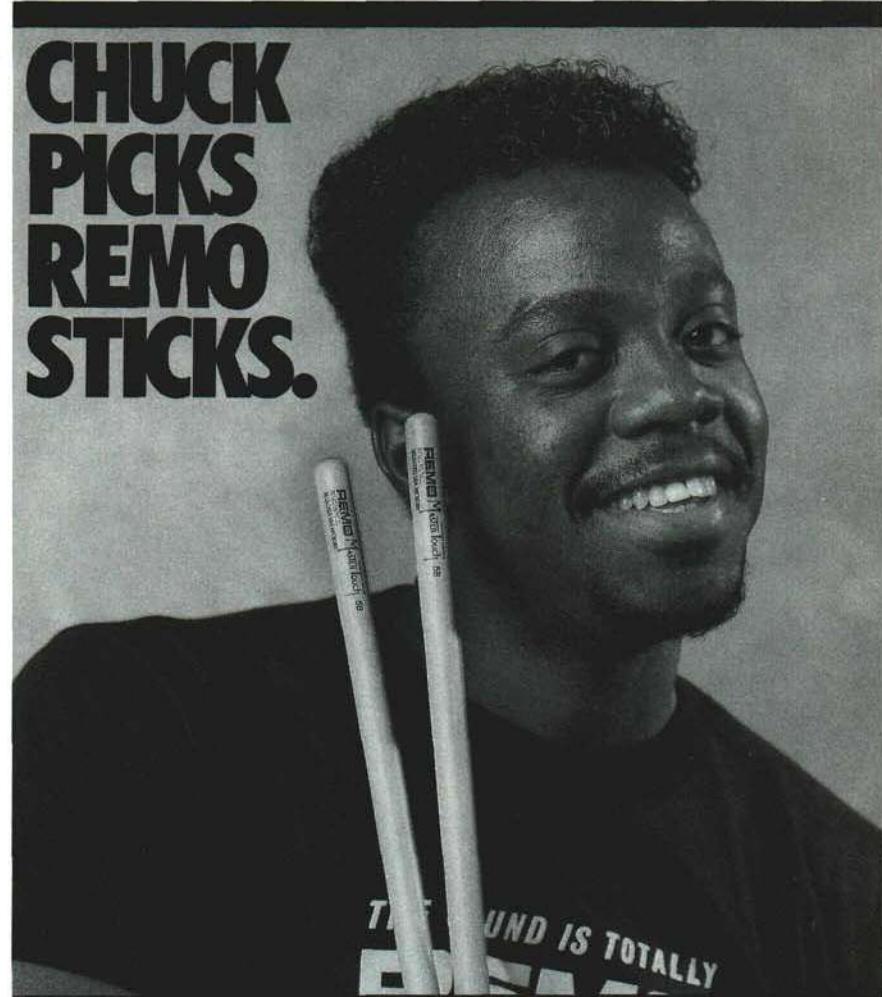
DC: Yes, I knew it. Oregon is not the rock 'n' roll hotspot. A few bands have come out of there. I thought, "I might be able to get somewhere if somebody outside the state hears us and takes us, but other than that, I'm going to have to move to LA."

RF: What changed your life to become a Christian?

DC: When I was in Wild Dogs, I was doing a lot of drugs. The band wasn't doing drugs, but I was. My brother is a born-again Christian, and I was talking to him one day and he said, "Why don't you read these scriptures," and I did and I started going to Bible study with him. One day I woke up and

said, "It's time," and from then on I never needed another drug. From there my career started going uphill. I've been a Christian for three years. There have been rough times, but I can handle it. "Tough Times Don't Last," there you go, there's the song. That's true. I just got tired of doing the drugs. My drumming was slipping, everything was slipping. It was terrible. I sucked, but I thought I was great. As soon as I got done with all of that, my drumming improved 1,000%. I'm very thankful. I hope somebody reading this can get something out of it. I might get nailed for it, but I don't care. I'm so happy that things are going great, and how can you deny the power of God when that happens?

RF: How did Tony MacAlpine come about



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for you?

DC: I was working with Wild Dogs at the time, and I was talking to Mike Varney because we were on his label, Shrapnel Records. He said, "I've got this new band I might be starting with a guitarist, and I think you'd fit in real well." He sent me a tape, and I was just blown away, because Smith had played with Tony on his first album. I went down, and it was just a trial thing. It was, "We'll let you play on five or six songs of Tony's album, and if he likes you for the first couple of days, we'll pay you, and if he doesn't, we'll give you the money to go back home." I went down and played, and Tony was really pleased with it, and I was real pleased with Tony. To me, for that genre of music, Tony is the best. It's kind of like a metal fusion, progressive rock, like what Yngwie [Malmsteen] did. But Tony's better than Yngwie as far as I'm concerned; he's more melodic. But it's that kind of stuff, with lots of drums going on and lots of odd-time stuff.

RF: How did you learn to play odd times?
DC: It's the ear. I listen to everything. I just take it in. I take from certain people and then apply it to what I do. No one can say,

"I'm completely original," because nothing is.

RF: But playing odd times requires more than duplication. You have to really know how to do that.

DC: I think a lot of it is just memory. If somebody played something on the guitar in, say, 7/8, I could duplicate it. I can't count it out, but I can listen and duplicate it. Even with this band, they could stop playing completely and I would know exactly where I was and exactly how the song goes, because I know it; I have memorized everything that happens. I know all the licks. And I don't have to sit and listen to the tape over and over again. Everything in the studio is improvised, and I'll listen to it once and it'll be, "That's what I did, I remember now." From then on, it's easy. Then I can do all my stick throwing and twirling and get away with it.

RF: What was your favorite Tony MacAlpine track?

DC: My favorite one was "King's Cup." It had a lot of stuff going on. I had this little drum break where I went into a double bass kind of a beat and threw a few double paradiddles in there. I can't really explain it, but it was a lot of fun doing that one.

RF: What are your favorite tracks on the Bad English album?

DC: My favorite would have to be "When I See You Smile." That song gets me teary. I was always a big Journey fan and of those big ballads with Steve Smith's big tom fills. Whatever else could fit on a song like that?

When I heard "Missing You" and John Waite's voice, it just killed me. I was going through a rough time in 1984, and that song hit me hard. So when I hear him sing "When I See You Smile," it's just incredible. That song speaks for itself. I love it lyrically and musically. That song tells me what this band is capable of doing. That was a one-taker. It was unbelievable. We went into the studio, they showed me the song, we went in and played it, and when we came out John said, "Man, that's just beautiful."

RF: "Forget Me Not" was the first single.

DC: I like that one, but it's real manic. That's fun, going out of your mind like that. It's real powerful, but it's not my favorite song. I like the more straight-ahead stuff like "Tough Times." "Ghost In Your Heart" is a killer to me. "Price Of Love" is great. I'm a ballad-head now. When John sings, I get goosebumps.

RF: Were there any tracks on the album that were hard to get?

DC: The hardest song to get was "The Restless Ones," because there had to be a perfect feel to it, and it wasn't coming out. It took four or five takes to do. It just had to have a feel that John was comfortable with. That was the only song I was wracking my brain with, thinking, "What can I do to make it better?" It was the whole band, not just me, but I was really wracking my brain. The song needs to be colorful; there needs to be moods and cymbals. When I first started playing it, I was just bashing, but I

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finally said to myself, "This song needs to be colorful, Deen. Think in terms of color. Blue here, a little yellow here—blue when it's nice and pretty and yellow when it's a little firey." So that's what I had to do. Four or five takes was a lot for us. Most of them were one and two takes. It was all improvised. It was, "Let's go in and play." The first song we did, which is the first song on the album, "The Best I Got," was one take. John was going, "I can't believe it." And the next song was like that, too. The ones that were two takes we got the first one to kind of feel it out, and then it was, "Okay, let's take it." It was really neat. There's just a fire in this band. Everybody has got something; this was destined to happen.

RF: Where did your incredible feet come from?

DC: I don't know. Maybe *Stairmaster 4000*. It's a mechanical stair machine and your legs get huge and really strong. That thing will build your legs to the point where your feet can fly. I work out constantly. My legs have gotten so strong and agile now. Before, they were fast, but they weren't like this. For the first week I was in utter pain, but it's great. I have been doing that for three years. When I became a Christian, instead of doing drugs, I began to work out. The DW Turbo pedal has a lot to do with it, too. It's the quickest pedal I've ever messed with.

RF: What about tips for playing double bass?

DC: I was a single bass drum player when I first started out, but when I got a double bass set, I just did quads for hours. I'd do it slower and slower and then faster and faster until it sounded terrible and I was losing it, and then I'd start over again. I did that every day for weeks, and I got it nailed down, finally. It took maybe three weeks until I could do the quads really quick, and then I started doing combinations. That's when I started getting into Bozzio and Smith, which was when I was about 14 or 15.

RF: There are a lot of people who have double bass drums but don't really utilize them. Where do you stand with that?

DC: I do it on some of the songs. I didn't use the double bass at all on the album, and I really can't use it too much, because I have to be there for John. When solo time comes, I do whatever I want. I do lots of combinations with the feet and the hands, and lots of riffing.

I tighten my pedals unbelievably tight. I'll go to a hardware store and get tighter springs because the springs that DW uses aren't tight enough for me. I'll put them on there and just crank them. I use wooden beaters, and I use Danmar Super Rock pads. That's how I get it going really quick. The pedals do all the work. My legs don't have to work so much when I'm doing the fast stuff; I utilize the pedal instead of my legs.

RF: Speaking of soloing, what do you think about when you solo?

DC: Basically I want to try to be technical, but still be rock 'n' roll. If you get too technical, it's, "Whoa, he's a jazz drum-

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mer." I'd like to be that, but not in this context. It's like Keith Moon, only a little more technical than that and a little less technical than Neil Peart. I do lots of feet stuff because I think people are amazed at how fast your feet can go. For me it's just adrenaline. And then it's just little things I'll come up with. I've got a thing where I juggle sticks while I'm playing the double bass. It's only two sticks—I can't do three yet—but it's throwing them up and catching them. And it looks really good. You have to look at the show aspect, because the kids really don't care how good you are, it's how cool you look—mostly. The musicians will go, "That's really cool, you did great," but most people who go to the concerts and buy the records aren't really

technical-minded. So you do the show stuff and they'll go, "Wow," or you do something really fast and it's, "That's fast!" Waite even said to me, "No fusion stuff; be a rock 'n' roller, man—Keith Moon." We can't be doing all those riffs because it'll go right over their heads.

RF: Are you thinking about a beginning, middle, and end concept too?

DC: Yes, I think in terms of colors. I kind of juggle out a little bit, then it'll get a little erratic and then quiet, and then I'll double bass out and do the juggling at the end. Then we go right into "Lay Down."

RF: That blues ending to "Lay Down" isn't on the record.

DC: I told them to do that. We ended it and I said, "We ought to go into some blues

thing and just play," and we did. It just fits it.

RF: You're playing a Tama double bass kit.

DC: I'm using the RS Pro series, but what they did was give me Artstar II shells with the RS Pro hardware.

RF: How are you getting that big sound?

DC: Right now, the toms are just strictly miked. I've got both my bass drums and my snare drum sampled from the album. I have the Akai 900 with the ASK90 in it. I don't know a lot about it, because Jonathan gave it to me, and only he and Jimmy, my drum tech, know how to use it. I don't want to learn it yet. I have too much to worry about right now, so they take care of it.

RF: What is it that you have to concentrate on?

DC: For me it's staying in time for John—being right there for him. I'm his right-hand man now.

RF: You listen more to him than to Ricky, the bass player?

DC: Yes. Ricky locks into me. I watch and listen to John. He likes to back-phrase when he sings, so I watch his heel. I can tell if he's comfortable. I do as much show stuff as I possibly can, but I'm watching and listening to him sing.

RF: Speaking of show stuff, your stick throwing is incorporated into your playing so much that it is part of your style. How long did it take you to learn how to do that?

DC: When I was in Wild Dogs, the music was so stale that I had to do something to keep my interest, so I started doing all this show stuff. I thought, "Why don't I throw the sticks and see how high I can get them?"

In the smaller clubs we're doing, though, it's pathetic, because I can't throw them any higher than three feet. We just did a show with Cinderella, and I was nailing them 20, 30 feet in the air, no problem. It's easier to catch them high in the air than when they're thrown short because it doesn't take as much concentration. A lot of it has to do with how you flip it. If you flip it a certain way, it'll come down a certain way. If you flip it the wrong way, it'll go behind you or in front of you, which has happened a few times. Thank goodness in this band it hasn't. You can see me throwing them way in the air in the video for "When I See You Smile."

RF: You also sing. When did you start doing that?

DC: When I was in my earlier bands like the Enemy, I was the lead singer and drummer, so I was playing all this Rush stuff and singing all the lead vocals, too, and doing all that twirling and throwing.

RF: When you first added the singing to your playing, did that affect your playing?

DC: A little bit. The best thing to do, though,

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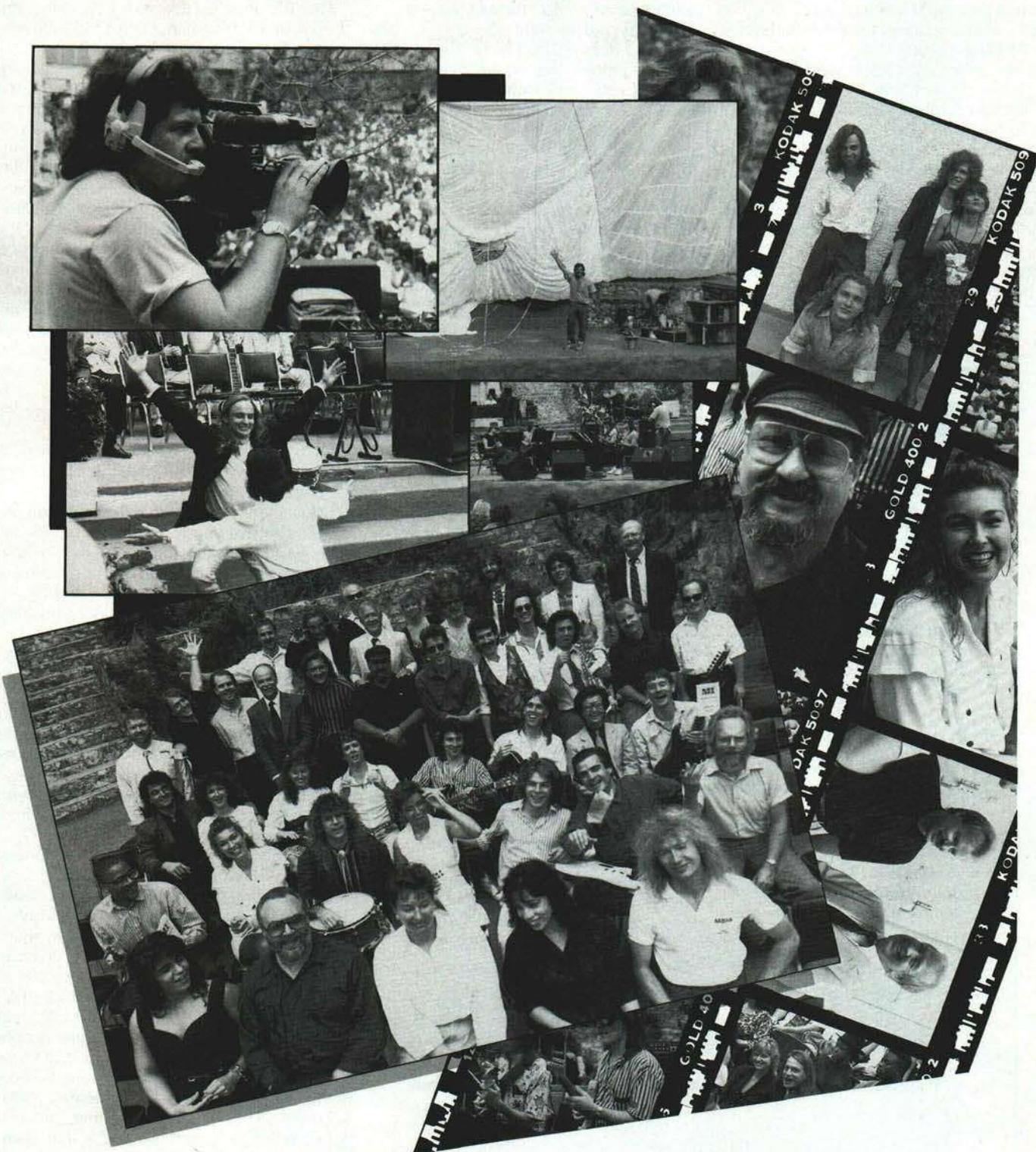
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is just to do it, and when you mess up, keep going. It's something you have to practice, definitely, but you just have to keep doing it and you'll nail it down.

RF: Was singing one of the prerequisites for the Bad English job?

DC: No, they didn't know I could sing at all. When I went into the demo studio, Richie asked me if I could sing. I said, "Well, I'm not a lead singer, but I can sing background." He said, "We don't need a lead singer; we need a background singer." It was funny. "Best I Got" was the first song I did, and everybody in the band flipped out. They were in the control room, and they looked at each other and started slapping each other's hands, going bonkers, because I was the missing high vocal, so it

was cool. It made me feel real good.

RF: You use a headset mic'.

DC: Jonathan suggested I try a headset mic', and I thought with all the moving and show stuff, it would fly right off my head, but I knew I couldn't do any of that with an overhead mic' either. So we went down to Guitar Center and I checked out four or five headset mic's. I found a Nady wireless unit with an Audio Technica microphone. I put that on my head, and it won't come off for nothin'. I can wiggle and headbang and it will stay there. I don't have to use tape or anything, so it's great.

RF: During rehearsal, you wore gloves.

DC: Only during the rehearsals, because my hands were hurting so much. We were playing the set twice each night, and I was

a little out of shape.

RF: You mentioned to me that you were suffering with some aches and pains.

DC: It's unbelievable, but I've found the trick. Our sound man, Dansir McCullough, has arthritis in his ankles, and he told me there is something he uses that takes away the arthritis within minutes called *Tiger Balm*. You can only get it at health stores. I use the *Tiger Balm* red, which is extra strength. I'll put maybe a finger-full on my wrist, about three inches across and all the way around it, and then I'll get an ace bandage and tape it up. I'll do it before every show, and I have not felt it since. It's unbelievable. I have not hurt once since I've used that stuff. It smells like cinnamon, so it even smells great. It's like icy hot. It's not inexpensive, but it's been incredible. Ricky was getting tendonitis in his elbow because of the way he plays, so he put that stuff on without the bandage, and the pain went away.

RF: Now that you have some gigs under your belt, how do you feel?

DC: This is the first time I've been in a band where when we go to the gig, I'm not completely nervous. When I was in Wild Dogs, there was a lot more pressure on me because everybody was saying, "Man, you've got to watch this drummer," so there was an expectation every time I played. I always wanted to be accepted and be the best, and this was before I was a Christian. With this band, there's a real peace because I'm a part of a team now. I'm thinking, "I have nothing to worry about; I'm not the star of this show. The band is the star of the show." The guys know it too because John said this is the first time he hasn't had to have a drink before he goes on. Everybody knows what everybody else is going to do, and it's always going to be right there. I've never been in a band where everything is flawless, but this is.

RF: If you had any advice for younger drummers, what would it be?

DC: The best thing is just what I did. Yeah, the struggles are hard and it's not always a lot of fun, but it pays off. You've just got to keep at it. Everybody says it, but everybody says it because it's true. Everybody did it. They all starved and went through their times. I was really blessed that I only had to do it for a couple of years. Some people are still starving ten years into it. I know some people in Oregon who are so worthy—one drummer in particular, Mike Lowery. He'll get there in time, but first he's going to have to get out of that town. Perseverance is really the key—that and hard work. You've just got to keep busting away.

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Portraits In Rhythm: Etude #21

In the March, 1989 issue of *Modern Drummer*, my *Master Class* column on Etude #17 addressed the subject of mixed meter. Since Etude #21 also uses mixed meter, I suggest reviewing that article if there are any remaining questions regarding the counting from one meter to another. A few of the basic rules for counting mixed-meter time signatures are as follows:

1. The bottom number of the time signature determines which note to count as the main beat; in Etude #21, it is the 8th note.
2. Always count the proper number of beats (determined by the top number of the time signature).
3. Maintain the proper counting relationship between quarter-note, 8th-note, and 16th-note rhythms. For example, in this work, since the 8th note receives the main count (as a quarter note would in 4/4 time), the 16th notes should be counted as 8th notes.

Now that we have discussed the proper way of counting these rhythms, let's concern ourselves with the main reason a composer writes in mixed meter—that is, phrasing. The following is a simple example of straight 8th notes in 5/8 time:



When a composer arranges the order of notes, as above, he expects a slight accent on each note grouping. This shifts the pattern from 3 and 2 in the first measure to 2 and 3 in the second measure. When these natural accents are not added to the 5/8 pattern, the rhythms sound as though they were written in 4/4

time:



If this principle is applied to Etude #21, we see the phrasing in measure one is different from measure three because the order of notes has been reversed from 4 and 3 to 3 and 4. This concept can be applied to almost all examples where shifting patterns of rhythm occur throughout the measures. An exception may occasionally be found in orchestral parts where an even articulation is desired even though patterns are changing because of other considerations in the music. Percussion notation is not always clear; therefore, orchestral players must constantly listen to the orchestra to determine correct phrasing. In solo music, such as Etude #21, the performer has creative liberties with phrasing.

Observations

1. Remember, the symbol written between measures one and two, notating 8th note equals 8th note, tells us that the 8th note value is constant throughout the metric changes.

2. Look at line two and notice that the notation in the first two measures does not give a clear indication of phrasing. Some possibilities for the first measure are: 3/2/2, 2/3/2, or 3/4. The second measure may be phrased as follows: 3/2/2, 3/4, or 4/3. When I play this etude, I phrase these two measures as follows: 2/3/2 and 3/2/2. I find it a good discipline to tap my foot on all phrasing points. Tapping the foot also helps to emphasize phrasing.

3. Play the short *crescendos* at the end of line six in the center of the drum. Quick changes between dynamics do not sound as effective when moving from the edge to the center.

Interpretations

1. In keeping with the opening discussion, add a slight natural accent to the beginning of all groups of notes. I indicated the phrasing in the first line with the use of a *staccato* mark. (See the first line of the etude.)

2. The accent at the end of the first line creates a dramatic dynamic change to the following *piano*. I suggest exaggerating this accent and then moving suddenly to the edge of the drum for the next two measures.

3. The series of rolls in line 3 are not tied together, and each roll should have a separate attack. Be careful not to end the rolls with an articulated sound or accent.

4. I suggest playing the series of flams in line 4 with the same hand. An exception may be applied to this rule when it is not necessary for the flams to sound the same—for example, when they are separated by a bar line. The reason for this is because the downbeat of the measure has a natural accent, and having both flams sound the same is not necessary. In this case, there are two instances when the flam on the downbeat is preceded by another flam (measures 2 and 4); either sticking will work in these measures.

5. In line 8, the *decrescendo* sometimes acts as a phrase marking and is an indication to play the entire measure as one phrase—that is, without adding a natural accent on the last group of four notes. In order to be consistent with the rest of the piece, I suggest adding the natural accent at this point.

6. The last measure of line 8 has two sets of 32nd notes. It seems that students who have a strong rudimental background want to play 32nd notes as double strokes. I do not advise this because it is difficult to play these notes evenly when using doubles. The 32nd-note rhythms, as with other rhythms, should be alternated.

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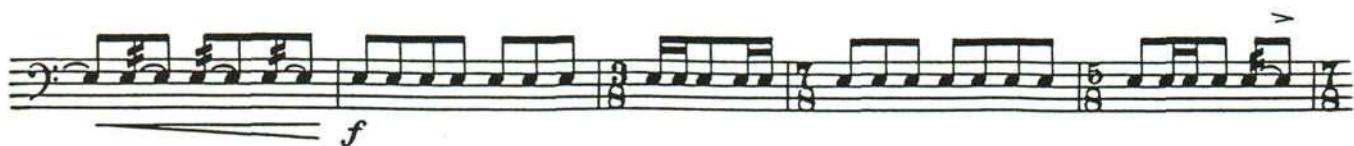
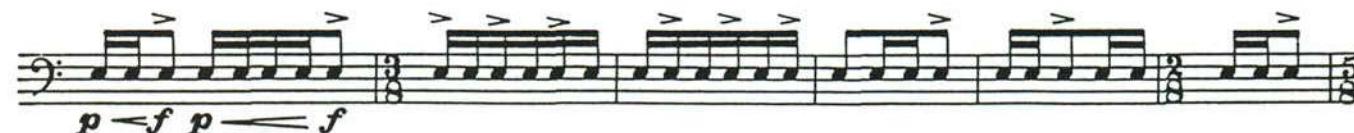
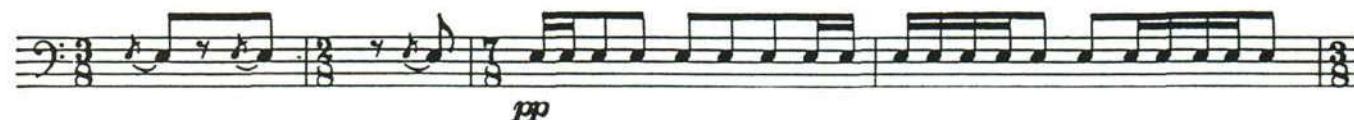
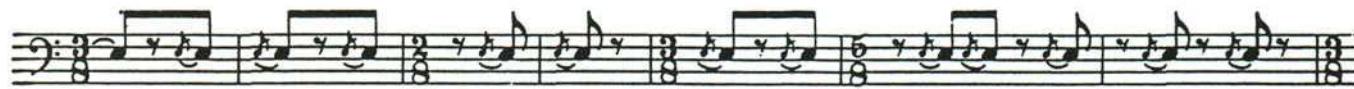
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ON TRACK



JAZZ-CLUB DRUMS—Various Artists. Verve 840 033-4. Various ensembles featuring drummers Art Blakey, Jo Jones, Kenny Clarke, Max Roach, Shelly Manne, Elvin Jones, Philly Joe Jones, Billy Higgins, Dannie Richmond, Billy Cobham, Alphonse Mouzon, Gene Krupa, and Buddy Rich. *Blues March/Norman's Blues/Si Si/Jordu/Let's Co Back To The Waltz/Three And One / Cone With The Wind / D.B. Blues / Do Nothin' Til You Hear From Me/I Let A Song Go Out Of My Heart / Billie's Bounce / The Ram And The Scorpio / Drum Battle.*

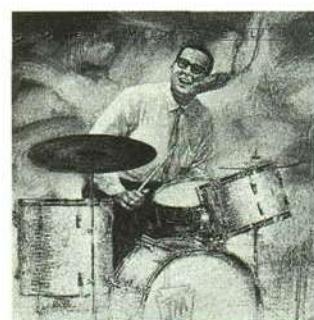
Jazz Club is a new budget-priced series featuring all-star artists from the Verve catalog, with each volume highlighting a particular instrument. The Drums collection focuses mainly on straight-ahead jazz cuts from the '50s and '60s. Each cut here does feature some fine drumming, but many of the chosen tracks are not great representations of the drummers' best work or of a particular master's signature style. In the most glaring examples, Billy Cobham is represented by a straight-ahead number with George Benson, rather than in the ground-breaking fusion stylings that made his mark, and the Elvin Jones cut (with the Jones Brothers) does not well exemplify the distinct, rolling waves of percussion every jazz buff knows as Elvin-ish.

Some gems are included, however, such as "Jordu," by the Clifford Brown-Max Roach Quintet. This cut is *truly a classic* and a classic show of Max's style. Shelly Manne's intricate brush work with the Bill Evans Trio on "Let's Go Back To The Waltz" is edifying listening for drummers, and the 1952 live cut, "Drum Battle," featuring Buddy Rich and Gene Krupa

dueling to the howling encouragement of a frenzied Carnegie Hall audience, is also great fun. Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers kick off the collection with "Blues March," a track that shows off the master's bluesy, pumping pulse and playful musical humor.

For those seeking a style sampler or a collection showcasing top drummers *stretching out*, this collection won't do. But for an enjoyable selection of strong tunes, ensemble playing, and first-rate swinging drumming, *Jazz-Club Drums* is a worthwhile buy. Take note that the series is available on cassette and CD only, and the *Drums* CD contains two extra cuts—one by Tony Williams, and the other a collaboration between Louie Bellson, Paul Humphrey, and Willie Bobo.

—Jeff Potter



JOE MORELLO—RCA 9784-2 RB. J. Morello: dr. P. Woods, A. Cohn, F. Socolow, P. Bodner, S. Schlenger: saxes. E. Royal, D. Severinson, N. Travis, C. Terry, J. Maxwell, A. DeRisi, B. Glow: trpts. B. Brookmeyer, U. Green, R. Hixson, W. Dennis, W. Andre, A. Raph, W. Byers: trms. J. Bunch, H. Jones: pno. G. Cherico, B. Crow: bs. G. Burton: vbs. P. Kraus: perc. *Shortnin' Bread/When Johnny Comes Marching Home / Brother Jack / Every Time We Say Goodbye/Just In Time/It's Easy / Shimwa / Summertime / A Little Bit Of Blues/It's About Time/Every Time/Mother Time / Time After Time / My Time Is Your Time / Sounds Of The Loop.*

Joe Morello has been an important figure on the drumming scene for nearly 40 years, and these somewhat vintage recordings clearly demonstrate the reason why. Here we have

a collection of selected material from Morello's *It's About Time* album made in 1961, combined with an assortment of big band charts recorded in 1962, but held back by RCA until now.

Morello has always been recognized as the ultimate small group player. His landmark work with the Dave Brubeck Quartet from 1955 to 1967 is sure evidence of that. On this release, Joe performs with a quintet featuring Phil Woods on alto and a young Gary Burton on vibes. Here too, is classic small group drumming with all the Morello-isms we've come to recognize. From the relaxed drive on meticulously tuned drums, to tasty fours brimming with humor and finesse, to the ease with which those extremely up-tempo tunes are handled. There's also a more than ample supply of Joe's precise and articulate brushwork, proving once again that he is among the handful of the world's great brush players.

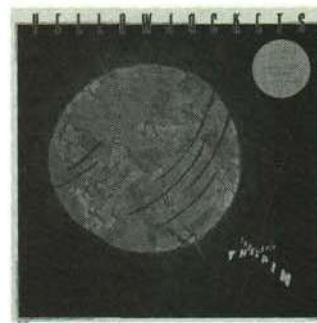
Another point one can't help but notice after listening to this recording is that Morello is equally at home in the driver's seat of a romping big band. A nice selection of charts by veteran arranger Manny Albam presents us with a side of Morello we haven't had much opportunity to hear over the years. From the well-defined ride cymbal and imaginative fills on "Brother Jack," to the confident, low-key support he brings to "A Little Bit Of Blues," this is big band drumming that ranks with the best.

Finally, we have Morello the soloist, another aspect of his playing that's been hard to ignore. Check out "Shortnin' Bread," "Shimwa," "My Time Is Your Time," "Sounds Of The Loop" and "It's About Time" for great examples of dynamic contrast, melodic and thematic development, polyrhythms, left-hand Ostinatos, and unbeatable technical wizardry.

Drummers unfamiliar or out of touch with the work of Joe Morello will find this a marvelous overview of the many musical sides of one of the most revered players of our time. This is drumming that's as inspiring now as it was when it was first recorded back in the early '60s.

Some things just seem to pass the test of time—and Joe Morello is no exception.

—Mark Hurley



YELLOWJACKETS—The Spin. MCA-6304. William Kennedy: dr., perc. R. Ferrante: kybds. J. Haslip: bs. M. Russo: saxes. *Geraldine / The Spin / Storytellers / Prayer For El Salvador / Whistle While You Walk / Enigma / Dark Horses / Blues For Nikki.*

Since being featured in *MD's* February '89 *Up & Coming* column, drummer William Kennedy has continued growing and contributing strong stuff as a member of the Yellowjackets. While many a band in their market are becoming increasingly production oriented—abusing excess overdubbing and sequencing to appease CD slickness sickness—the Jackets have, album by album, gone further in the other direction. On their recent tour to promote this album, the quartet let its jazz roots emerge more than ever. Live, as on the album, the group's interplay also flowed freer, and as usual, the ensemble phrasing and dynamics were breathtaking. In short, they always sound like a team of players who not only hold each other in high mutual respect musically, but also actually *like* each other.

The newly spacious, elastic sound of the band is due to a little all-around spring cleaning: The sequencing, once experimented with so heavily on *Four Corners*, has been tastefully reduced for sparse, percussive texturing; Russell Ferrante is using more acoustic piano; Jimmy Haslip's bass sound is even fatter, creating a pleasing upright/electric hybrid sound; and William has included more fluid cymbal work into his



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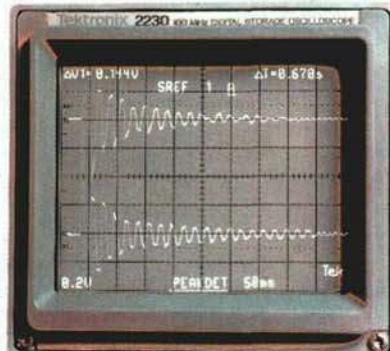
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grooves. Kennedy offers beautiful bits of cymbal playing throughout the album, giving the gorgeous compositions more air, space, and shimmer than on any of his previous records with the group. At times he makes the cymbal the propelling voice in conjunction with light drum punctuation, as in "Prayer For El Salvador." The tune grooves strong even though there's no snare backbeat to be found. On "Blues For Nikki," William integrates that dancing cymbal into a funky "2 and 4" backbeat groove, rather than going for the more predictable funk closed hi-hat sound. The result proves that you don't always have to sound hard to be funky. Lucky for us drummers, the Yellowjackets recorded this disc at Oslo's Rainbow Studios of ECM Records fame—a label often noted for its crystal cymbal sound.

William Kennedy had a hard act to follow when he first won the Yellowjackets' drum chair after Ricky Lawson's departure. But through the last three diverse albums, he has proven himself to be a worthy successor. He's a team player who balances sensitivity with drive in a very contemporary approach, and deserves attention from all drummers' ears. Definitely give *The Spin* a spin on your turntable.

—Jeff Potter



JOHN HASSELL/FARAFINA—
Flash Of The Spirit. Intuition DCP566-7, 911862. J. Hassell: trpt., keyboard-activated sounds. Mahama Konate: balafon. Paco Ye: djembe (master drum). Soungalo Coulibaly: flute, perc., voice. Tiawara Keita: tama, soucou (talking drums). Seydou Ouattara: main bara drum. Beh Palm: accom-

panying bara drum. Baba Diarra: second balafon, perc. Souleymane Sanou: shekere. J.A. Deane: percussion-activated sounds. Daniel Schwartz: elec. bs. *Flash Of The Spirit* / *[Laughter]* / *Night Moves* / *[Fear]* / *AirAfrique* / *[Wind]* / *Out Pours* (Kongo) / *Blue* / *[Prayer]* / *Kaboo* / *[Play]* / *(Like)* / *Warriors Everywhere* / *[Courage]* / *Dreamworld* / *[Dance]* / *Tales Of The Near Future* / *[Clairvoyance]* / *A Vampire Dances* / *[Symmetry]* / *Masque* / *[Strength]*.

Flash Of The Spirit unites keepers of the traditional flame with a harbinger of future sounds, and the results—miraculously—work. Farafina, an eight-piece percussion/dance ensemble from Burkino Faso in West Africa, is rooted in the traditional percussion of their homeland. Mahama Konate, a master balafon player (African folk xylophone), is the founder and leader of the group. Since their inception in 1978, the group has made successful concert appearances in Africa, Europe, the Far East, and the U.S. John Hassell, progressive composer, trumpet player, and high-tech electronics experimenter, has always tampered with the boundaries of contemporary sound. Drawing from neo-classical, minimalist, jazz, electronic, Indian, and other international sources, Hassell's mixed bag has earned the honor of being indefinable. Appropriately, it has been referred to as his "Fourth World" concept, and that label is suitable for this collaboration.

It would seem that Farafina's and Hassell's music are worlds apart. But the strongest common element that links their concepts together is *texture*, and therein lies the beauty of this disc. The music on *Flash Of The Spirit* is a feast of texture. Farafina's rhythms alone are exhilarating, but ultimately the varied richness of the percussion textures defines the moods. Farafina's artful percussionists act as a rhythm section and as soloists all at once, as they interact with the electronic elements. Hassell's horn lines and triggered samples, along with J.A. Deane's percussion-triggered samples, weave and bob through the drums, enhancing

the joys and mysteries of the African sound.

The music works on subtler levels than just one listen will reveal. On first hearing, listeners will enjoy Farafina's expressive use of their instruments, from the high-spirited, festive "Dreamworld [Dance]," to the exotic, mystical "Night Moves [Fear]." Digging deeper, percussionists will especially appreciate the fact that the expressive textures do not necessarily result from a large array of instruments, but rather from the skillfully varied approaches to a *limited* number of instruments. The music is minimalist in the sense that it is not based on structure, but rather on improvisation and textural enhancement over a trance-like continuum. But it is far more appealing and successful than many other minimalist-influenced works. This is because the repetitive lines are played with the interpretive freedom of the drummers' hands, hearts, and souls, yielding a fluid, dancing pulse—as opposed to the over-rigid Ostinatos of many minimalist pieces, which sound as if they aspire to the programs of cold-soldered sequencers.

Brian Eno and Daniel Lanois collaborated with Hassell on the production process of creative editing and mixing, which further shaped the sound sculptures. Let's be thankful that these artists said "ho hum" to musical categories and brought this collaboration together. The result is a rich musical expression, at once very modern and very ancient.

—Jeff Potter



24-7 SPYZ—
Harder Than You. In-Effect 88561-3006-1. Anthony Johnson: dr. R. Skatore: bs., vc. P. Fluid: lyrics. J. Hazel: gtr., vc. *Grandma Dynamite* /

Jimi'z Jam / *Spyz Dope* / *Social Plague* 11 *Must Co On* / *Ballots Not Bullets* / *Jungle Boogie* / *Spill My Cuts* / *Sponji Reggae* / *Tango Skin Polka* / *Pillage* / *New Drug*.

Though 24-7 Spyz somehow manage to incorporate hip-hop, bebop, goth-metal, reggae, funk, rock, polka, and even an Eastern European folk melody into their sound, they are still basically a snot-nosed hard core band. And this is ultimately good, because without that brash attitude (harder than you, indeed!), all those different influences would merely come across as feeble lip service. To play all those styles somewhat convincingly does take a certain amount of dexterity, though, leading us to drummer Anthony Johnson.

Johnson gets plenty of room to rock out here, and the band's somewhat unusual style-hopping gives him ample opportunity to show his stuff. "Sponji Reggae" and "Ballots Not Bullets" prove he can sit heavy on a groove, "Jungle Boogie" shows he can lay down the funk, "Grandma Dynamite" opens up with the obligatory hip-hop rhythm—nicely-played, by the way—and the rest of the album is splattered with break-neck 2/4 hard core rave-ups. For much of *Harder Than You*, Johnson's job is to keep some pretty crazy guitar work from sending the whole thing off into space, which he usually accomplishes just by staying on the quarter-note hi-hat. When hard core time comes around—often during choruses, for just long enough to threaten total disarray—Johnson is right in there; you can practically feel skinheads' combat boots shaking the CBGB's dance floor. It may be an ironic statement, but by displaying the chops necessary to cover the musical ground they do, Johnson and 24-7 Spyz (along with other bands, like Fishbone and Bad Brains) might just be bringing respect to the hard core music that fuels their fire.

Adam Budofsky



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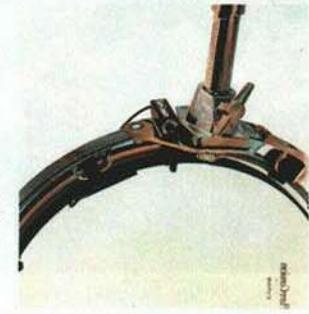
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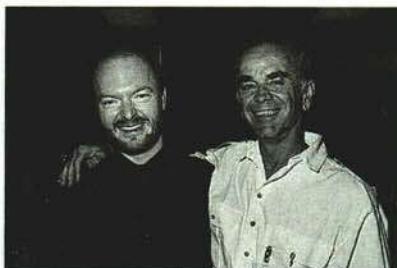


Photo by Jaeger Katos

Bandleader Brandon Fields with event co-sponsor Remo Belli.

The City of Los Angeles Pipe Band marched onto the stage at U.C.L.A.'s Royce Hall on September 10 and played several traditional Scottish folk tunes. This was the beginning of a marathon seven-hour celebration of the percussive arts, benefitting the Percussive Arts Society. Sponsored by Remo Drumheads and Shure Microphones, Drums In Concert featured some of the best drummers from the worlds of jazz and rock.

Joel Leach, Chairman of the Jazz, Percussion, and Studio Music Programs at California State University, Northridge, acted as MC for the day. The first drummer he introduced was eight-year-old wonder Jacob Armen. Armen, who made his orchestral debut before his second birthday, stunned the crowd with his drumming prowess. He soloed and played a number with the Brandon Fields Band. The band consisted of Fields on saxophone, David Witham on keyboards, Walt Fowler on trumpet, Jimmy Johnson on bass, and Mike Miller on guitar.



Photo by Lissa Wales

Louie Bellson

Next came the legendary Louie Bellson, who amazed the audience with his brilliant technique, which is always tasteful and exciting. His creative solo had the crowd yelling for more.

Gregg Bissonette was then introduced. He began his set with a brush workout on the snare. Switching to sticks, Bissonette played a couple of numbers from the Fields Band's recent album, *The Traveler*, on which he had played. A very animated drummer, Gregg reminded anyone who

might have forgotten about his talent as a jazz and Latin—as well as rock—drummer.

Remo discovery Virgil Donati, from Australia, next played to music tapes that he had programmed himself. He elicited loud cheers from the audience with his incredible technique and freight-train, full-speed-ahead solos.



Photo by Lissa Wales

Virgil Donati

The program was broken up into two-act sets, with 15-minute breaks in between. There was an area outside the hall with a food stall and exhibit booths for Shure and for Remo (who had set out some of their new Putty Pads for people to try).

When the program resumed, Jeff Porcaro took the stage and showed the audience why he is known as "Mr. Groove." With a big smile on his face, it was clear that Jeff was really enjoying himself, and so was the audience. Porcaro took no solos, which is not surprising, since he has said many times that he doesn't like to play them.

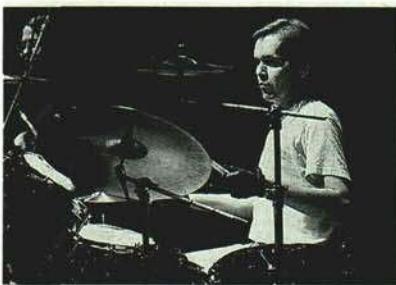


Photo by Lissa Wales

Mark Craney

Mark Craney's reappearance on the drum scene was an emotional as well as musical high. Walking slowly with a cane, Mark acknowledged the cheering audience with a wave, then sat down behind his kit and proceeded to notify the world that he is back. One would expect that after three years out of drumming due to serious illness, it would be hard to build strength, but Mark looked and sounded strong. After his set, he thanked everyone who had helped him via the fundraiser staged for his benefit in 1987, and expressed his gratitude for the support so many people had given him during his ordeal.

Both Porcaro and Craney demonstrated how to play with the groove and blend with the music in an almost symbiotic way. Ricky Lawson also possesses this fluid ability to blend and groove. Smiling from behind his kit, Lawson proved to be a rock-solid player. When the time came to solo, the man really worked out.

Vinnie Colaiuta proved to be as impressive as everyone says he is. It is hard—if not impossible—to find an appropriate adjective that hasn't yet been used to describe his playing. His combination of technique, instinct, and energy are legendary.



Photo by Jaeger Katos

Ricky Lawson, Myron Grombacher, Gregg Bissonette, and Steve Houghton enjoyed watching the other performers.



Photo by Lissa Wales

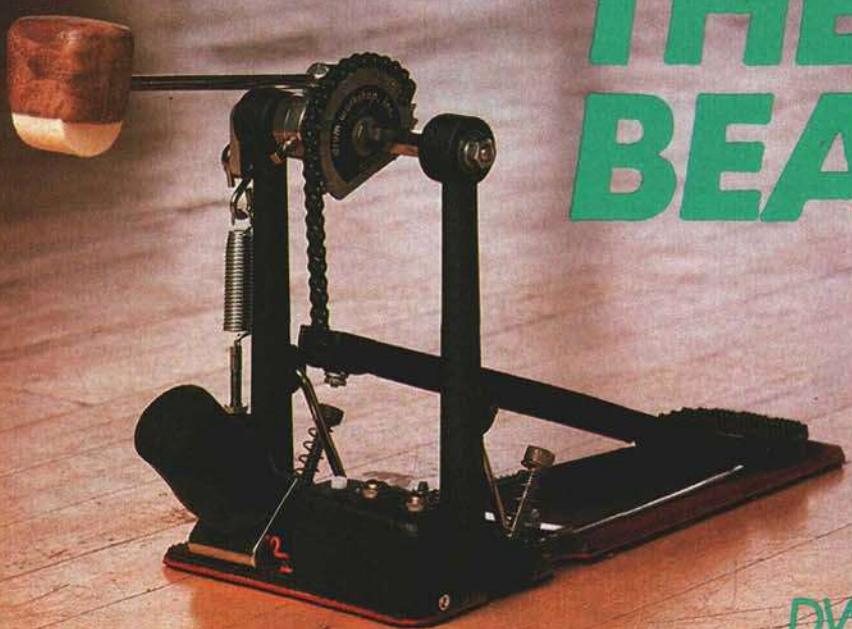
Jacob Armen

Myron Grombacher got off to a fast start playing two numbers. Listening to Grombacher play rock 'n' roll with the Fields band, I was reminded again—as I had been many times during the day—of how the line between rock and jazz has blurred. Considering the myriad Latin influences on these players, I lost count of how many styles of music were played in one day by one band.

Next up, Ndugu Chancier performed with 1 + ONE partner Patrice Rushen. They had the crowd yelling with enthusiasm for their hot, funky jazz. For their second number, Ndugu moved from his kit to the vibes. Then on the third number, he started off on the kit, and ended it on vibes and timbales, with Patrice playing percussion on her portable keyboard. It made everyone want to get out of their seats and dance.

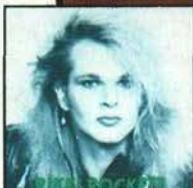
Music educator and practitioner Steve Houghton was up next to play with the Fields band. Houghton gave a good dem-

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What all this means is that whether you go acoustic, electronic or any combination of the two, Drum Workshop's full line of trigger pedals will keep you in control. That's undoubtedly why more of today's top players rely on DW trigger pedals than all others combined. So, if you aren't playing a pedal that gives you this much control of your feelings, maybe you should be playing a DW electronic trigger pedal, too.



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onstration of how a drummer should play in the background to enhance the music. Directing the band from behind, he gave a masterful performance.

With only three days of practice, the U.C.L.A. Drum Line, led by percussion instructor David DiLullo, impressed the audience with their powerful sound and amazing precision. As the drum line filed off stage, Sonny Emory quietly sat down behind his kit and began playing. His solo made a nice bridge between the drum line and the slow jazz that was coming up with the return of the Fields band. Emory played some brilliant solo work; one could feel his energy flowing off the stage.

Much credit must go to the Brandon Fields Band, who played so many styles of music superbly—adjusting to five different drummers. It was definitely a day to remember, and, hopefully, one that will be repeated in the future.

—Susan Alexander

BUMBERDRUM 2

For about 20 years, the city of Seattle, Washington has been sponsoring the Bumbershoot Arts Festival on Labor Day Weekend. On September 4th the festival included, for its second year, an interna-



L. to R.: Jamey Haddad, Nana Vasconcelos, Michael Shrieve, Cordon Gottlieb, Art Blakey.

tional drum festival known as Bumberdrum, with the purpose of showcasing world drumming and percussion styles in specific groupings, and culminating in a massive United Nations kind of jam. (Much of the credit for rounding up so much diverse talent goes to Jon Kertzer.)

Three times during the course of the day audiences got to see and hear the following performances:

First, a Sundanese (West Java) percussion group organized by visiting University of Washington artist Endo Suando performed. This fine group played in a

style known as Jaipongan, which is a hybrid of several gamelan styles featuring drumming on a barrel-type drum (that produced an almost Afro-Cuban flavor), a woman singing in a very sexy, fluid style, and some spectacular low-end gongs.

Next was the wonderful duo of Nana Vasconcelos and Trilok Gurtu. They have been playing together for years, as their sets demonstrated. When they perform, the essence of India meets the essence of Brazil, with body music, sensual and rhythmic vocals, and instrumental and color combinations to tantalize. On one of

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my favorite pieces, Nana played a berimbau-like pattern on large sculpted cowbells with brushes, while Trilok played temple blocks with a small shaker.

Following the duo was a quartet called the New York Percussion All-Stars (soon to be the World Percussion Quartet), consisting of Guilherme Franco, Jamey Haddad, Cyro Baptiste, and Cordon Gottlieb. The group wove grooves performed on their bodies, vocal sounds, and provocative instrumental combinations. Franco played congas and berimbau, Haddad played Hadgini (electric clay drums), Baptiste was on "Cyrophone" (cardboard pipes played with rubber sandals), and Gottlieb was on vibes, marimba, Japanese iron sculpture, and voice. The performance showed how an ensemble can groove as a group and as four distinct soloists.

Next up was Fatala, a ten-person group of drummers and dancers from Guinea, West Africa, led by drummer Yacouba "Bruno" Camara. This was a powerhouse group featuring a wall of sound, no drum solos, and the continually fascinating relationship of drums in six and dancers in four.

Two drumset artists were individually

featured: Art Blakey and Michael Shrieve. Blakey sounded fresh as ever, his crush rolls and polyrhythmic cycles around the drums reminding everyone present that he's still very much the master. Shrieve showed lots of chops and a love for baiao, samba, and salsa. His solo included playing alongside several sequenced synthesizer patterns. One of these set up one of the finales, in which all the groups filled the huge stage of the Seattle Opera House with a monster jam, bringing the audience to its feet, dancing and clapping. The fun and comradeship of the event were best summed up when Blakey stood up and threw his sticks into the audience.

—Frank Goodman

NEW APPOINTMENT TO SABIAN MANAGEMENT

Sabian Ltd. has announced the appointment of Mr. Andy Zildjian to the position of Manager of Sales, Promotion, and Artist Relations at the company's USA (East

Coast) office/depot in Hanover, Massachusetts.

With a thorough background in all facets of cymbal making, Mr. Zildjian moves to his new position from that of Sales Representative with H.S.S. Inc. of Richmond, Virginia, where during an 18-month period he achieved a 400% increase in sales and in excess of 100% area growth in his territories of Virginia, West Virginia, Mississippi, Arkansas, and Louisiana.

SIMMONS RETURNS

After several months of inactivity, Simmons Electronics USA is back in full operation. Dave Simmons has announced that the company will recommence production of the SDS 2000 drumkit, the Trixer, and the SDX, and will continue to introduce new electronic products. **Simmons Electronics USA, Inc., 2630 Townsgate Road, Suite H, Westlake Village, CA 91381, 1-800-447-3786, in California, 1-805-494-5007.**



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NEW AND NOTABLE

HSS INTRODUCES SLINGERLAND SETS



Slingerland Spirit Plus kit.

Reviving the sound and styling from a classic era of popular music, HSS has introduced two new Slingerland drumsets, the *Spirit* and *Spirit Plus* models.

The *Spirit* is a five-piece kit, featuring resonant 9-ply mahogany shells with precise 45-degree bevelled bearing edges. It comes complete with felt-loaded lugs to eliminate rattling, neoprene sleeves and memory locks to prevent slipping, and isolators on brackets and castings to control frequency absorption. The kit also features original Slingerland-style lugs,

counterhoops, and badge, and is available in metallic red, metallic blue, metallic silver, black, and white. The basic *Spirit* set includes a 16 x 22 bass drum, 10 x 12 and 11 x 13 toms, a 16 x 16 floor tom, a 6 1/2 x 14 metal snare drum, three single-braced stands, and a bass drum pedal.

The Slingerland *Spirit Plus* set features four double-braced stands, including a straight cymbal stand, a boom, a hi-hat stand, and a snare stand, and is specially fitted with Evans CAD/CAM *Uno 58 1000* clear batter heads and clear *Resonator* bottom heads. The *Spirit Plus* is available in four finishes: mirror chrome, black, dark blue, and metallic red, and the drums come in the same sizes as the *Spirit* kit's. Both sets offer 9 x 10 and 12 x 14 toms and second 16 x 22 bass drums as options. **HSS, PO Box 9167, Richmond, VA 23227, (804) 798-4500.**

anodized or painted to specifications. They feature choice of either XLR or 1/4" connectors, transducers specifically located to reduce false triggering, and 1/4"-thick black neoprene pad skins that the company says have rebound and response similar to those of acoustic drums. The pads are available in five sizes: 5" (SP500), 6" (SP600), 8" (SP800), 10" (SP1000), and 12" (SP1200). **Sapphire Percussions, 7 Stedman Road #106, Lexington, MA 02173, (617) 861-6193.**

SONOR SNARE DRUM CATALOG

Sonor now offers a catalog devoted exclusively to their line of snare drums. The snare drum catalog is available to consumers free of charge, either from an authorized Sonor dealer, or directly from Korg, USA.

The catalog describes in full detail and full color the different models available from Sonor, including everything from manufacturing methods to acoustic characteristics and various types of shell materials. **Sonor, c/o Korg USA, 89 Frost Street, Westbury, NY 11590, (516) 333-9100.**

SAPPHIRE PERCUSSIONS DESIGNER PADS

Sapphire Percussions has introduced their Designer Trigger Pads SP Series. Designer Pads are made of aluminum and can be

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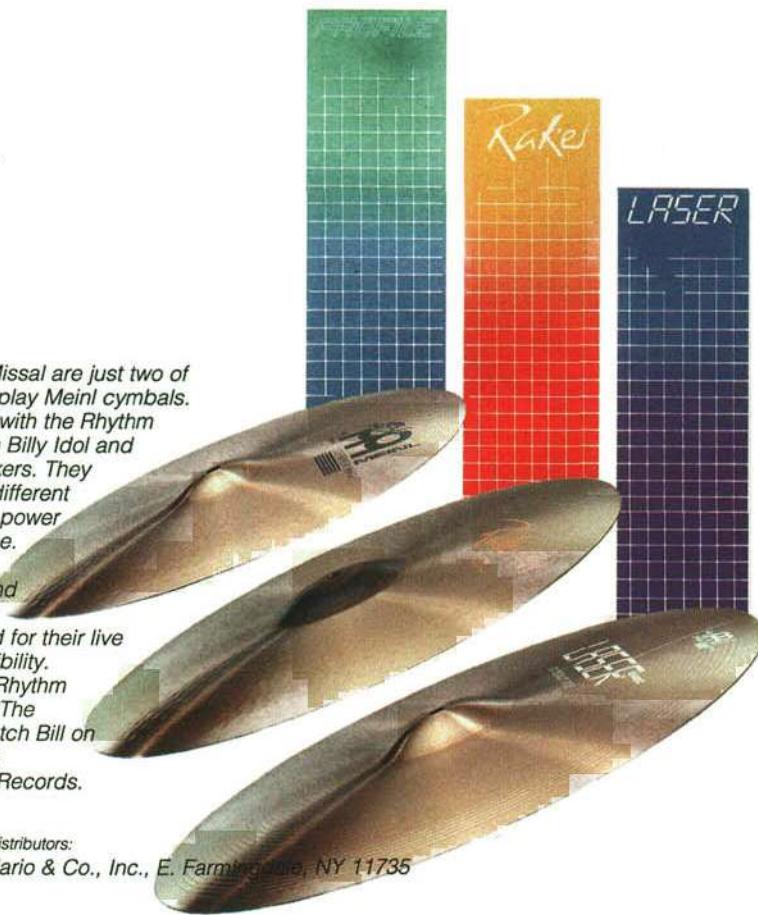
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– *Your friends at Drum Workshop*

ROC-N-SOC DRUM THRONE



Roc-N-Soc has come out with a pair of completely hand-crafted drum thrones—one with a backrest, and one without. The thrones, which feature large tricycle-style seats, are sturdier than other drum thrones, the makers say, because they employ a five-point base. The seats are pitched slightly forward in order to take weight off a drummer's lower back and to reduce the urge to sit on the edge. The thrones also make use of a spring box

system rather than the standard hydraulic system, and have a height-adjustable main post constructed of one-inch square solid steel stock. The unit without the back rest weighs 31 pounds. **Roc-N-Soc, 2511 Asheville Rd., Waynesville, NC 28786, (704)452-1736.**

"Drumsticks" printed parallel to the logo in red ink. The shirt is also white. Both shirts are made in the USA of 100% pre-shrunk cotton and are available in small, medium, large, and extra-large sizes. Contact your local music shop or send \$12.00 per shirt to **Pro-Mark, 10707 Craighead Drive, Houston, TX 77025.**

NEW PRO-MARK T-SHIRT DESIGNS



Pro-Mark has created two new designs for their T-shirts. The TS10 features a Pro-Mark logo superimposed over a stylized music staff, and is available in blue and magenta over a white shirt. The TS-20 features a vertical Pro-Mark logo printed in black ink, with "The World's Class

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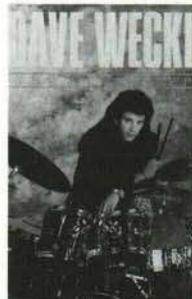
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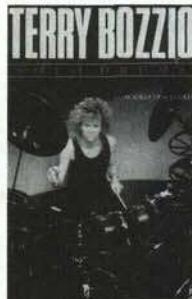


DAVE WECKL THE NEXT STEP

Dave concentrates on time playing, constructing a groove, beat displacement, (playing backwards), cymbal technique, phrasing, creating a drum part, playing in odd times, and soloing. This video also features three songs from *Contemporary Drummer + One*, a latin groove, and some fantastic solos.

BACK TO BASICS

Dave outlines his philosophy and technical approach to the drums, covering stick control, foot technique, brushes, and independence. He also performs with several tracks from *Contemporary Drummer + One* and plays some explosive solos.



TERRY BOZZIO SOLO DRUMS

Terry presents his overall approach to the drum set starting with an incredible solo that he breaks down section by section, explaining each technique used. He also covers double bass drumming, hand technique, 4-way independence, and offers a study of his drum part for *U.S. Drag*. Booklet included.



STEVE SMITH PART ONE

Steve describes and demonstrates methods for developing time and meter and his basic approach to rock and jazz. This video also includes some incredible solos and performances with Steve's group *Vital Information*. *Best Music Instruction Video of 1987* (American Video Awards). Booklet included.

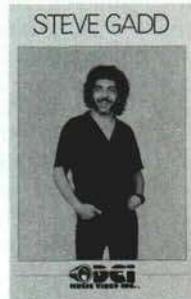
PART TWO

An exciting follow-up with invaluable tips on double bass drumming, developing creativity, soloing, and creating a drum part. This video includes rare in-concert footage of *Steps Ahead*, plus great performances by *Vital Information*. Booklet included.



ROD MORGENSEIN PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Rod discusses how to develop versatility, creating a drum part, techniques for playing in odd time signatures, and his approach to ghost strokes and double bass drumming. On-screen graphics included.



STEVE GADD IN SESSION

Presents 90-minutes of incredible music and dialogue by Steve Gadd with Will Lee, Eddie Gomez, Richard Tee and the late Jorge Dalto. This classic video will give you a behind-the-scenes look at masters at work as they arrange tunes, work on grooves, and play funk, latin, reggae, shuffles, and ballads.

UP CLOSE

Steve discusses his influences and demonstrates some of the classic drum parts that he has played on hit records like "Fifty Ways to Leave Your Lover." In addition to playing some great solos, Steve shows how he applies rudiments to the drumset and demonstrates his bass drum technique.

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Xerstick's 1XP stick, featuring weighted ends and "play on anything" rubber tips,

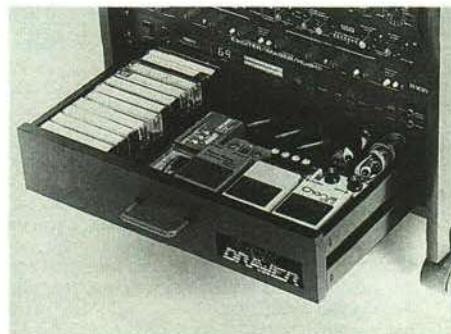
was developed to strengthen drummers' discipline, muscle tone, accuracy, and all-around conditioning. The sticks are 3/4" x 16", and, according to the maker, are ideal for drum corps, training, conditioning, and before-gig warm ups. Xerstick has also announced its newest model, the 5A Nylon, and also its new main distributor, the Kent Drum Company of Buffalo, NY. **Xerstick Inc., PO Box 575, Tonawanda, NY 14151-0575, (716) 695-0729.**

ALEX ACUNA VIDEO

Paul Real Sales has been appointed wholesale distributor of the new instructional music video, *Alex Acuna—Drums And Percussion*. The video features Alex playing drumset and percussion instruments as he demonstrates a mix of North American, Caribbean, South American, and African rhythmic styles. An instructional booklet accompanies the 60-minute tape, which has been produced in hi-fi stereo. The video also includes four full-length performances with Alex's Los Angeles-based band, the Unknowns. **PR Percussion, 1507 Mission St., So. Pasadena, CA 91030, (818) 441-2484.**

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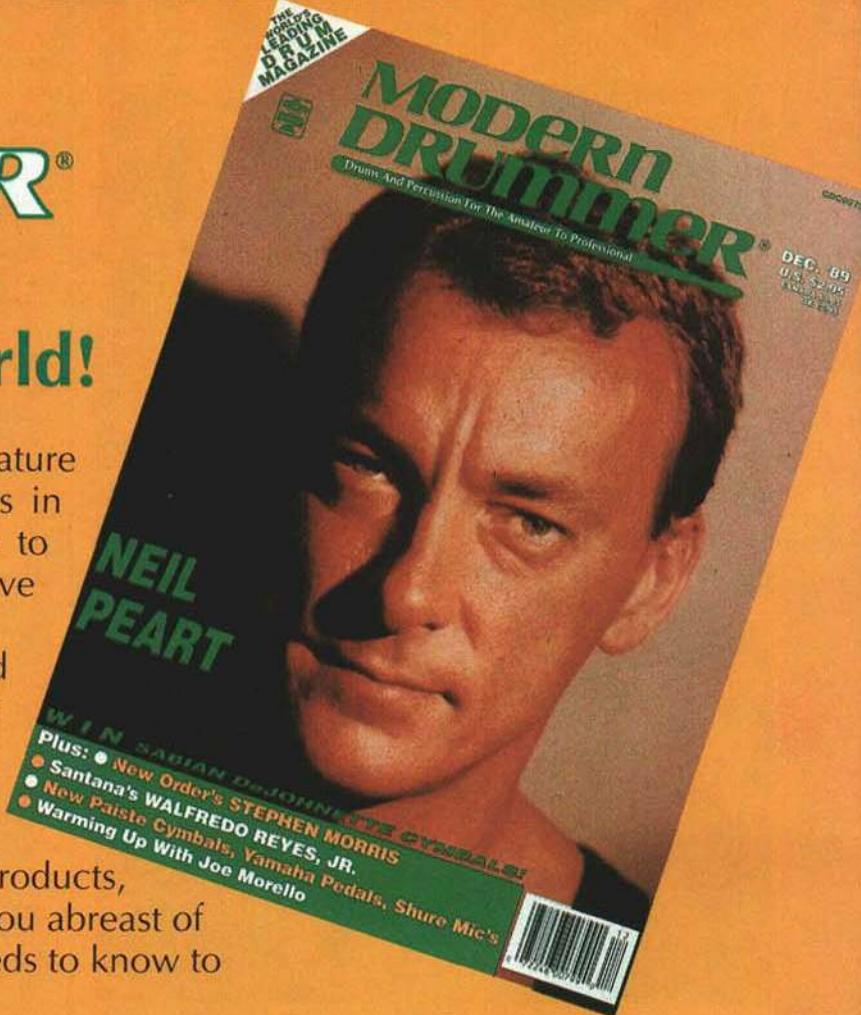
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IT'S QUESTIONABLE *continued from page 16*

the shell. If your drum has a logo badge without a hole, or no logo badge at all, you have a defective drum, and Ludwig will be happy to take care of the problem under warranty. You need only contact a Ludwig dealer and arrange to have the drum returned to the plant; it will be fitted with a hole and badge immediately.

If you cannot be without the drum for any length of time, it is a simple matter to cut a hole in your bass drum head, allowing air to escape that way. A majority of drummers do this as a means of muffling the drum anyway, so the lack of a vent hole in the shell ceases to be a problem. If you wish to have such a hole anyway, but don't want to return the drum to Ludwig, Bob Britton suggests that it would be a simple matter to drill your own hole. Clamp a small block of wood to the inside of the shell to prevent your drill bit from splitting the inside ply, and then drill carefully from the outside in. It might be a good idea to start with a small drill bit (around 1/8"), and then work up to a hole about 1/2" in diameter. You can obtain a grommet to fit into this hole at any hardware store.

Q. It seems like there is a new interest in the see-through drums of the early '70s. I would like to know which manufacturers made see-through drums. I know of Ludwig (*Vistalites*), Fibes, and Zickos, and I believe Pearl was in on it, too. Were there any others?

M.J.

Stockholm, Sweden

A. As far as our research indicates, Pearl made opaque fiberglass drums, not clear drums. Clear drums were actually made of acrylic plastic. Besides the companies you list, Slingerland also briefly marketed a clear drumset called the Phantom series.

Photo credit for *MD*'s November cover was in error.
It should have read Jonathan Parkhurst Black.

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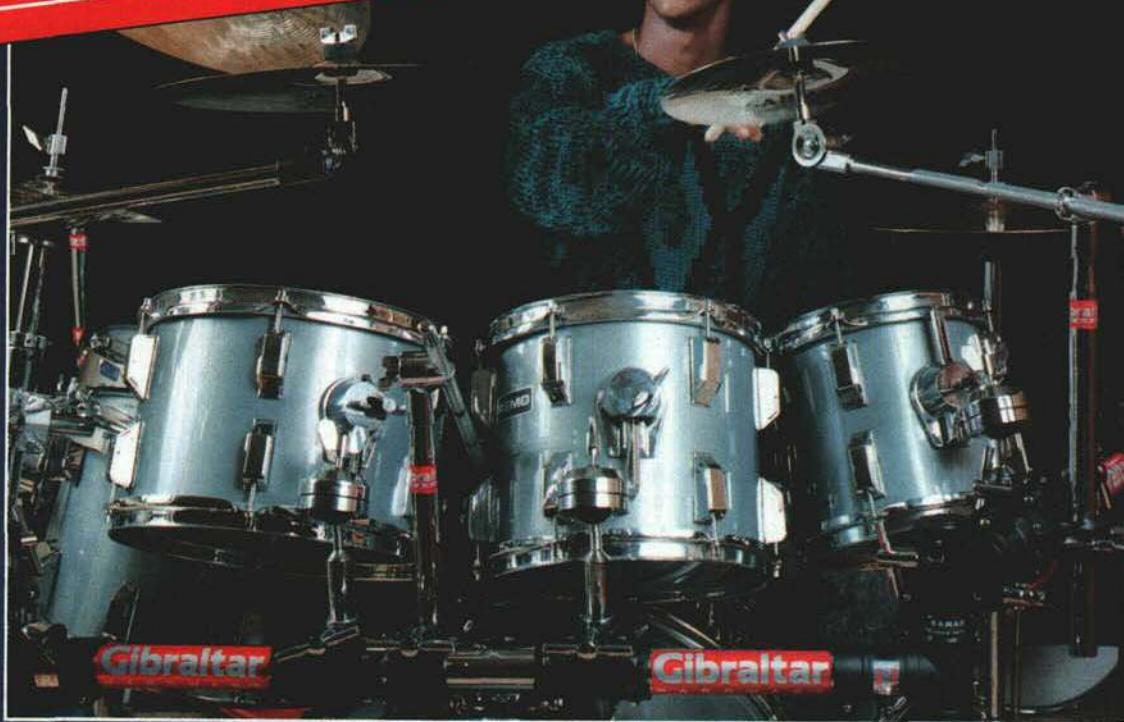
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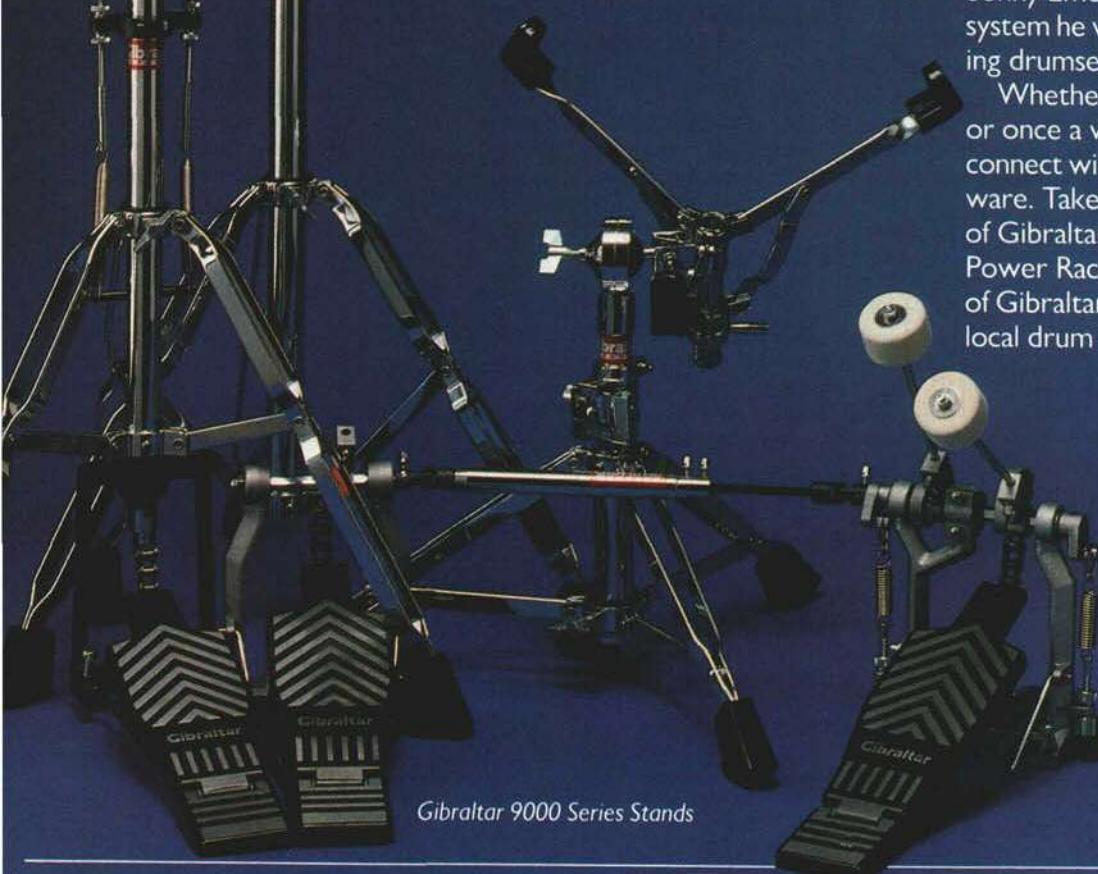
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sic, as I have. In closing, I will quote John Cage, who said: "Our ears are now in excellent condition!" Thanks again for the great work!

Rusty Aceves
Livermore CA

DRUM TUNING

I would like to compliment Larry Nolly for his informative article in your October issue. His *Shop Talk* article on drum tuning is by far the most well-rounded piece that I have ever read involving this controversial subject. Larry sheds new light on areas in which most drummers are in the dark. Thanks for one of your many great articles.

Michael Howe
Batesville MS

LOCOMOTION

Many thanks for the transcription of Philly Joe Jones' "Locomotion" solo in your October issue. Philly's contributions to jazz drumming have been extensive. In the '50s, he was virtually unmatched, and all drummers should know his work.

Congratulations, as well, on a fine and musically well-balanced magazine. In today's rock/pop-oriented environment, I am always pleased to see items like Joe Morello's excellent series on basic sticking. How about some technical articles by Elvin Jones or Tony Williams? Keep up the good work.

John W. Corriss, Jr.
American Embassy-Brasilia
Brazil

DISTRESSED WITH THE CLICK

The article in your *Basics* column in the September '89 issue has caused me some distress. In "The Click," Mark Zonder seems to imply that using a click track is an acceptable substitute for having good time. While a metronomic pulse is valuable as a practice tool and for certain performance situations, to rely on one to keep the time is an unmusical and ineffective shortcut.

Let me address some specific quotes. Mr. Zonder states, "If you have ever had the problem of playing your 45-minute live set in 38 minutes and wondered why, the click is your solution." This is a frighteningly irresponsible statement. Inexperienced play-

ers could read that and think, "Ah, that's what I'm missing." No, the click is not your solution; learning the art of timekeeping is.

Mr. Zonder also says, "It is highly recommended that a click track be taken to auditions." Although a Top-40 band may be impressed, really good players are going to be more concerned with feel and *time*. Perfect meter is not necessarily perfect time. He further states, "In the studio, a click is a must for the drummer." The only time a click is a must is when different parts are to be synchronized at different times. If the musicians involved decide to use a click—fine. But it is not a must. The classic recordings sound great, not because the meter is perfect, but because the musicians played with great feel—their own feel.

Our obsession with perfection has brought us to the point where most music is performed with the time dictated by a machine. However, good time can only be learned by playing with and listening to the other musicians *exclusively*. Music, by definition, is a form of human expression. The more we rely on machines, the less musical the product.

Dave Colter
Cambridge, Ontario, Canada

IMPRESSED WITH MD

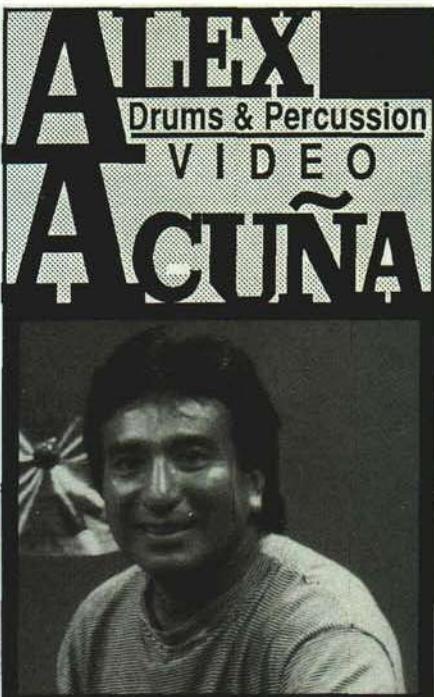
I am impressed! Months ago, I sent a letter to your *Ask A Pro* department directed to Neil Peart. I asked if he had any suggestions about how I could break into working as a crew member on the road with a big-name band. Well, after hearing nothing for a couple of months, I figured you folks either didn't want to print the answer ('cause then you would have kids all over America writing in to hook up with the Stones, Def Leppard, etc.) or you just didn't want to research it.

Then came September 27, 1989. I had just finished eating dinner after a hard day of work and college classes, and guess who called! No, not Neil, but someone just as good: Larry Allen, Neil's drum tech. I am impressed (not to mention shocked and dumbfounded)! I thought it was a joke at first.

Anyway, Mr. Allen was great! He talked with me in a very straightforward and honest way for a half hour or so (long-distance!), and he never seemed in a hurry to finish. Additionally, he gave me his address and asked that I keep in touch if I had any more questions or just wanted to talk.

My appreciation and respect go out to you and your fine magazine. The phone call was one hundred times more than I ever expected. *MD*'s rapport with the drumming industry must be excellent to have been able to answer my question as you did. My thanks to Larry Allen, Rush, and *MD*! I am impressed! Renew my subscription!

John H. McCusker
Cedar Grove NJ



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you want. I found that this method did work better than simply mounting the head and tuning up to the desired pitch. But I was also curious as to whether I could speed things up a bit, as one does not always have time to let a drum sit overnight when changing heads. Usually, when you need a new head, you need it now. So I mounted one of the *Genera* heads by tuning it *real* tight, and I even pushed it down with my hands a couple of times. I then let it sit for about five minutes before tuning it back down to the pitch I wanted, which was quite low. It worked fine.

These might be the most significant drumheads to have come along in years. Being able to mount a couple of bass drum heads and get a great sound within minutes, without having to put anything inside the drum or on the heads, is a genuine breakthrough. It's also the way it should be. For perhaps the first time, the craftsmanship that goes into a quality bass drum will be apparent.

At the time of our review, the *Genera* bass drum heads were still being developed. The heads we received were prototypes; the line will be introduced at the Winter NAMM show in January. Plans are for the *Genera* bass drum heads to be offered in 18", 20", 22", and 24" sizes. List price had not been determined at the time this review was written. Also, the names *Ambient* and *Miking* were the "working" names only, and might be subject to change. But whatever they end up calling them, Evans has a winner—and so do drummers.

Snare Drum Batter Heads

For snare drum batters, there are two versions of the *Genera* head: a "regular" model and the *Dry* model. The first one has a Mylar circle mounted to the underside of the head; the *Dry* model also has a circle, plus it has 20 small holes around the outside edge that go through both the head itself and the circle. Overall, these heads produce a sound that is similar to using a *Zero-Ring* on a regular, medium-weight snare drum batter. But there is a slight difference in that the *Genera* heads don't sound as "muffled" as heads sometimes sound with the *Zero-Rings*. Perhaps it has something to do with the circle being under the head instead of sitting on top of it, but whatever the reason, they sound a little more "live," without excess ring.

The *Dry* head is exactly that—plenty of attack with relatively few overtones. It's much like the effect you get with a thick, heavy *Zero-Ring*, but of course you don't have an external piece of plastic flapping around, which can be a nuisance on occasion. The "regular" *Genera* head is somewhere in between an open, regular snare batter and the *Dry* batter. It has a little bit of ring to it, which one might need for projection, but not too much. (Incidentally, I tested the *Genera* snare drum batters on a Ludwig 5x14 *Supra-Phonic* snare drum.) As with the bass drum heads, I found it advantageous to initially crank the heads up pretty high, let them sit awhile, and then tune

them back down to the desired pitch.

With the *Dry* model, the question comes up about durability; after all, the head is starting out with holes in it. Wouldn't that make the head more susceptible to breakage? So far, I haven't been able to break one. First of all, the holes are not located in the prime striking area, so they're not very likely to take a direct hit. But even when I tried to strike the drum as hard as I could right over a hole, I didn't break one. Granted, I've never had much trouble with head breakage anyway, so we may have to wait for a few genuine "heavy hitters" to use these heads before the final verdict can be given. But from my experiments, the holes do not seem to cause any significant weakening of the head.

One thing I did notice with the *Dry* model, however, was increased response from the drum. All of those little holes serve to vent the drum considerably, and I could detect a difference. This might be a great head to use on a piccolo snare drum, where the close proximity of the heads to each other can cause a choked feeling in the response.

The *Genera* snare drum batters seem to do the job they were designed for very well. My only reservation would be that you need to know where you are going to use your snare drum so that you can make the proper choice in models. In my own situation, I have one particular snare that I tend to use for a variety of purposes, and I need every extreme from a wide open, ringy drum to a very muffled one. So for that drum, a regular medium weight snare head with a variety of sizes of *Zero-Rings* works best for me. But if you tend to use a *Zero-Ring* consistently, you might want to check out the *Genera* batters. Each model lists at \$22.50. Currently, they are only available in the 14" size, but Bob Beals of Evans says that they will be happy to add other sizes if they start getting requests to do so.

Snare Heads

There are also two *Genera* snare-side heads: the *Snare 200* and *Snare 300*. The numbers refer to the weight of the film, making the 200 a very thin head, with the 300 a little thicker. The film used on these heads is opaque, and has a slightly textured feel. Both heads were extremely responsive, with the 200 giving a very bright quality to the drum and the 300 giving a little darker sound. On the Ludwig metal snare drum, I preferred the 300, as it seemed to give the drum a little more body.

Due to the thinness of these heads (especially the 200), they would probably be best suited for jazz or orchestral players. And more sensitive rock players could certainly use them as well. Extreme heavy hitters might want to use thicker heads, though. The *Genera* snare heads list at \$14.00 each. Currently, they are only available in the 14" size.

—Rick Mattingly

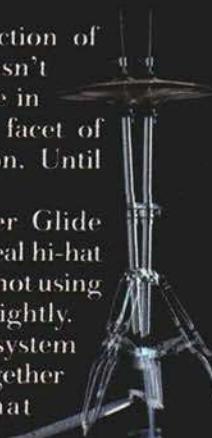
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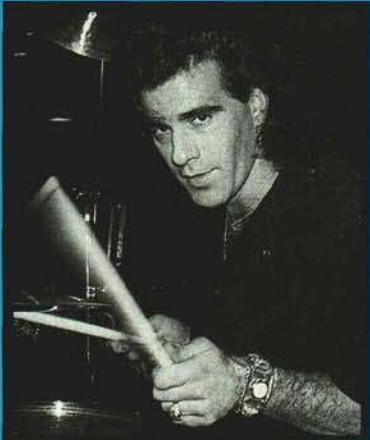
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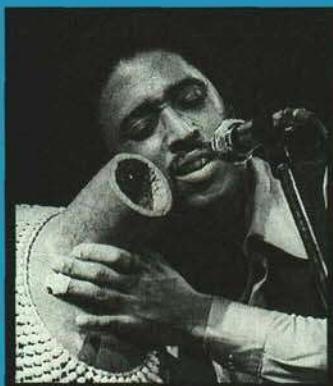
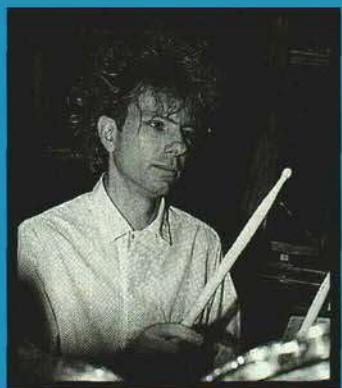


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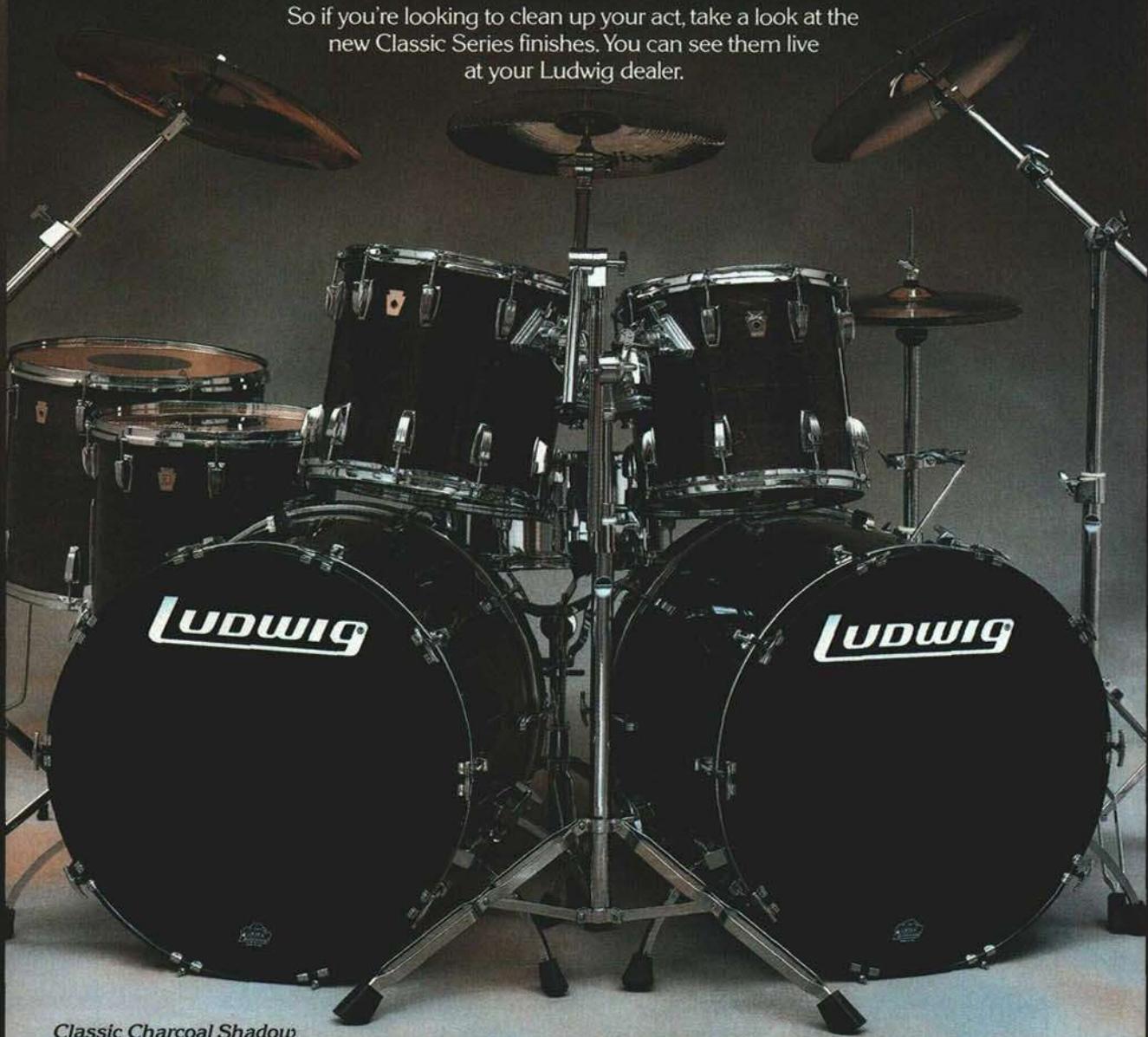
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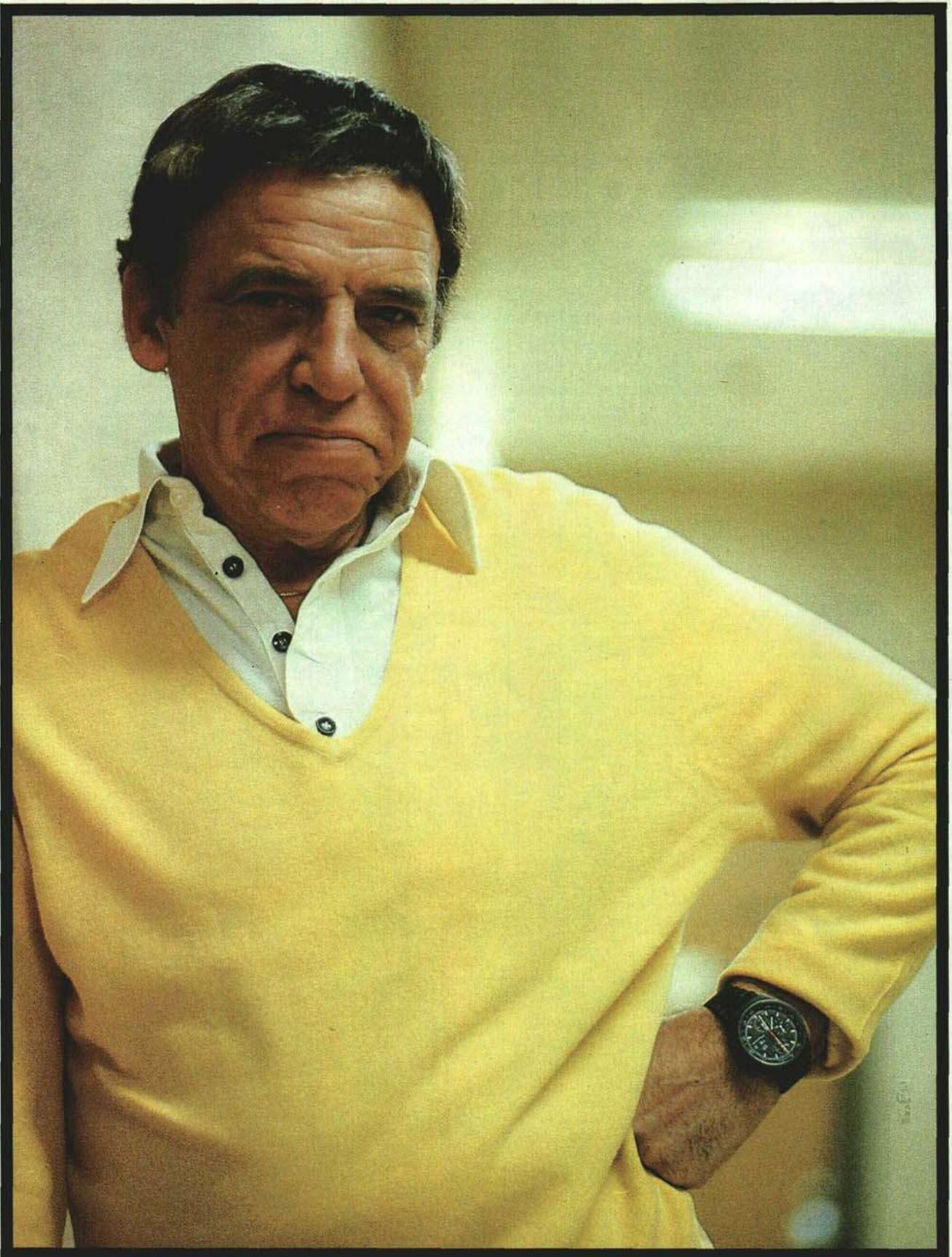
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